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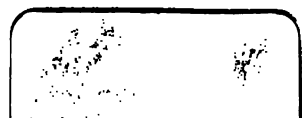
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THE  
MISSIONARY'S LEGACY  
TO HIS FRIENDS;  
OR,  
GLIMPSES OF THE LAND OF THE  
BLESSED.

BY MATTHEW BAXTER.



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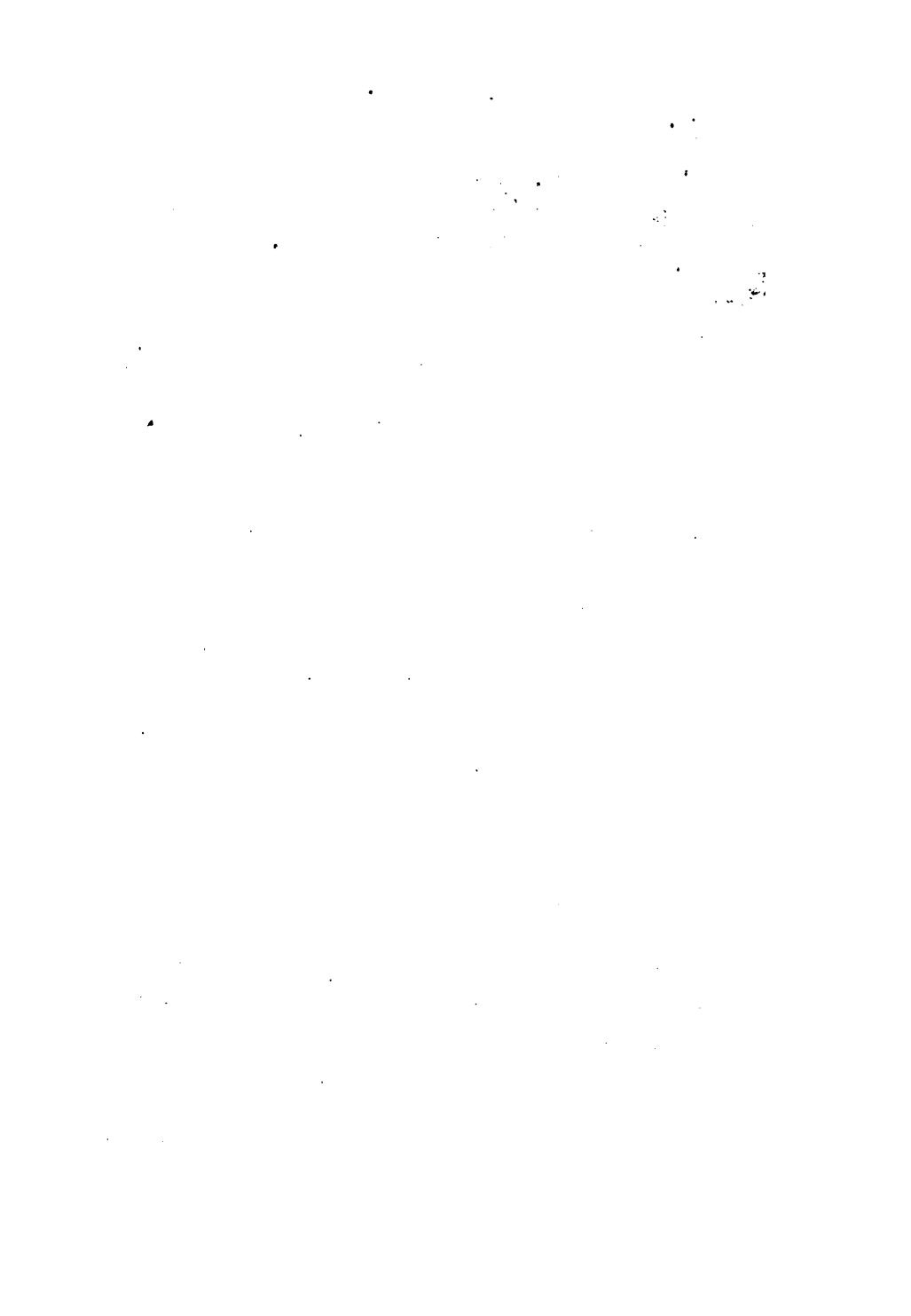
## DEDICATION.

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To the REV. JOHN FLESHER, the worthy individual, who stimulated me in early youth to mental effort, and put me through my first exercises in preaching; the Minister, who by a power of eloquence which has seldom been surpassed, and still more by his devotion of body, soul, and spirit to his work, first inflamed my youthful breast with a desire to excel in the exercise of the sacred functions of the Christian Ministry; the Student, who directed my steps in early life beyond the ordinary track of theological studies into the Arena where the Master Spirits of former generations met in controversial conflict; the kind-hearted Friend, who has since closely watched all my movements, mourned over my frailties, rejoiced exceedingly over any small virtues which may have shed their feeble ray athwart the general gloom in the development of my character,—this Work is gratefully inscribed by

THE AUTHOR.





## P R E F A C E.

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THE Author of the following sheets had often been asked to publish his views on several of the subjects treated in this volume. A multiplicity of engagements prevented his doing so. At length, when he was suddenly called upon to go on a Mission to the other side of the Globe, he felt as if the question had been narrowed down to "Now or Never?" He at length consented, when he had only a single month left in which to do the work. The thoughts to which he has given expression herein, had long occupied his mind, and had, indeed, found expression in discourses delivered on the occasion of the death of the Rev. Robert Eckett, the late Mrs. and Miss Cuthbertson of Pimlico, and the Rev. W. Ince of Gannow, and in lectures delivered in our Preaching-place in the city of Edinburgh, but the preparing of copy for the Press took place during this brief interval. If, by the favour of the Public, another Edition should be called for, he flatters himself that he will be able greatly to enlarge and improve the discussion on most, or perhaps all, the points.

BURNLEY,

*December 12th, 1867.*



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# THE MORAL QUALIFICATION FOR THE LAND OF THE BLESSED.

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## I.

### RELIGION: ITS NATURE.

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RELIGION is variously designated in the Word of God. It is called "*wisdom*," "*understanding*," "*knowledge*," "*righteousness*." It is in some instances designated "*piety*," "*uprightness*," "*perfection*;" while in others it is described as the state of being "*born again*," "*the fear of the Lord*," "*departure from evil*," "*consecration to the Lord*," "*being on the Lord's side*," and the performance of the Lord's "*service*."

Now these various terms are suggested, not by so many different things, but by the same thing under different aspects. Religion is one; and these terms are all used to convey highly-elevated notions of this "*one thing*." But, probably, the noblest term ever employed in Holy Writ to designate the enjoyment and practice of true religion is that used by the apostle in 1 Tim. iv. 8: "*For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*" This term "*godliness*" is the most exalted term ever employed to designate Religion, and it is as *appropriate* as it is exalted. And why is it appropriate? We answer:

1. *Because the enjoyment of Religion involves the renewal of man's nature after "the image of God."*

Does the reader inquire, after the manner of the Jewish Ruler, "*How can this be?*" Does he tell us "to analyse the brain of a Robespierre and a Wesley, or the blood of a Rush and a Wilberforce, and the various organic compounds in each of them will be found to consist of the same constituent elements?" Does he inquire, "Hath not the *wicked* hands, and eyes, and ears? Hath not *he* appetites, affections, and mental powers as well as the *good*?" Is there any difference between the anatomical structure of the one and of the other? or between the physiological laws to which they are both subject?" Does he say, "There is no difference. If you prick either, he will bleed; if you tickle either, he will laugh; or if you poison either, he will die?" True. But while physically and mentally they are alike, there is an amazing difference between them when viewed in their *moral* aspects. The one is spiritually healthful, the other is the prey of a moral poison. The one is a child of the Devil, the other a child of the Most High. The one is an apostate creature, the other is a saint. The one is dead "in trespasses and sins," the other pulsates with all the energies of a new life. The difference between them is analogous to that which obtains between the fallen and the elect angels: a difference vastly greater than that between the unshapen block of marble in the quarry and the most elaborately-chiselled statuary in the most famous galleries of Art, on which genius has exhausted all its resources of imitation or of invention.

As primeval man when created was formed in "the image of God," so the new man is renewed after the image of Him that created him "*in righteousness and true holiness.*" The resemblance between him and his Maker is not a mere superficial resemblance, such as a painting bears to its subject, but a likeness in the moral principles of being such as things of the same kind bear towards each other. It is not a lifeless resemblance, like that of the dumb inert statue towards the illustrious personage whom it represents, but a likeness in

life and action such as a worthy son bears to his sire: "a living, speaking, walking resemblance"—a resemblance so striking that St. Peter speaks of him that bears it as partaking of the Divine nature.

Let the intelligent reader learn how grace can beautify this apostate nature of ours, by St. Clair's observations in relation to his sainted mother. "My mother," said St. Clair, getting up and walking to a picture at the end of the room, and gazing upward with a face fervent with veneration, "she was divine. Don't look at me so; you know what I mean. She, probably, was of mortal birth; but, as far as ever I could observe, there was no trace of any human weakness or error about her; and everybody that lives to remember her, whether bond or free, servant, acquaintance, or relation, all say the same. Why, cousin, that mother has been all that has stood between me and unbelief for years. She was a direct embodiment and personification of the New Testament—a living fact to be accounted for in no other way than by its truth. O mother! mother!" said St. Clair, clasping his hands in a sort of transport; and then, suddenly checking himself, he came back and seated himself on an ottoman.

St. Clair's mother was a specimen of saintship in one of the Southern States of America. Her qualities were brought out in an uncongenial soil, and in a murky atmosphere; but the virtues, which command admiration at all times, do, like diamonds in the night season, excite the most delightful surprise by sparkling so beautifully in the dark and cloudy day.

Nor was the triumph of grace in moulding and fashioning this illustrious saint a solitary instance of its power. The instances are numerous in which human nature has been moulded into the likeness of the Divine. The devout reader will have a lively recollection of this mighty change in himself, and will regard it as the great event of his life. Before that, he bore on his soul the image of the first apostate man; since that, he has borne the likeness of the "Father of lights." Before that, his soul was, as to the absence of all spiritual cul-



ture, a moral chaos, "without form, and void;" since that, it has, under the culture of the Holy Spirit, been adorned with the choicest plants of virtue. Before that, his soul was as a cage of unclean birds, which preyed on his very vitals; since that, it has become the palace of the whole sisterhood of the Graces. Before that, it was the arena in which Conscience and Reason were overthrown by lawless appetites and passions; since that, it has been a temple in which God dwells and restores to Conscience the sceptre of dominion, while Reason approaches, with all the passions in her train, to offer sacrifice on the altar before the Deity enthroned there! We answer: The term "godliness" is appropriately applied as the designation of true Religion,

2. *Because it involves in its practice, strict conformity to the will of God, as disclosed in His most Holy Law.*

The Divine Being is the embodiment of eternal rectitude. The Divine law is the transcript of the Divine mind, and it seeks embodiment, so to speak, in human character. Or, to vary the illustration, the Divine law is a set of rules, by the strict observance of which the mind of God is reflected in all the acts of human life; the image of God brought out to the notice of all observers.

In moral action, a man is what his principles are. His outward virtues are but the offshoot of those principles of law that rule within. The reader will have no difficulty in perceiving that by principles we mean those affections and motives which are the operative causes of moral action. When these are right, the action is godlike; and when these are wrong, the action is wrong. Two persons shall perform the same outward action, and in the one it shall be virtuous in its principle, and in the other entirely vicious. Take an illustration. A and B each give £500 towards a benevolent institution. The actuating principle in A is the love of his neighbour, and his motive is the glory of God. In B, the actuating principle is vanity, and the motive, love of praise. The first is a noble and generous act; the second is a

mean and contemptible performance. In the one case, we behold the operation of a lofty and generous affection; in the other, the action of selfishness, as pure and unmitigated as ever froze up the sympathies of a human bosom. The money was given, not because he loved his neighbour, or wished to promote the glory of God, but out of ostentation. The simple explanation of the gift is just this: He loves human praise more than money, and he pays his £500 to the credit of some charitable institution, and expects to be reimbursed by the praise of men. It is the case of the ancient sect of the Pharisees over again. He does his deeds to be seen of men, and verily "he has his reward."

The principles of the godly man are in harmony with the spirit of God's law, and his godliness consists in affections, emotions, desires, a conscience, and a will, which are habitually ready to perform all the good and the acceptable will of the Lord.

Love to God can only mean one thing. God has a Character. To love God is to love His character as well as His being. Thus, as the lamented Robertson, of Brighton, puts it: "God is *Purity*. And to be pure in thought and look; to turn away from unhallowed books and conversation, to abhor the moments in which we have not been pure, is to love God. God is *Love*. And to love men till private attachments have expanded into a philanthropy which embraces all—at last, even the evil and enemies with compassion—that is to love God. God is *Truth*. To be true—to hate every form of falsehood, to live a brave, true, real life—that is to love God. God is *Infinite*. And to love the boundless, reaching on from grace to grace, adding charity to faith, and rising upwards ever to see the ideal still above us, and to die with it unattained, aiming insatiably to be perfect, even as the Father is perfect—that is to love God.

"This love is manifested in obedience. Love is the life of which obedience is the form. 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. . . . He

that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings.' Now here can be no mistake. Nothing can be love to God which does not shape itself into obedience. We remember the anecdote of the Roman commander who forbade an engagement with the enemy, and the first transgressor against whose prohibition was his own son. He accepted the challenge of the leader of the other host, met, slew, spoiled him, and then in triumphant feeling, carried the spoils to his father's tent. But the Roman father refused to recognize the instinct which prompted this as deserving of the name of love. Disobedience contradicted it, and deserved death. Weak sentiment. What was it worth?

"So with God. Strong feelings, warm expressions, varied internal experience co-existing with disobedience, God counts not as love. Mere weak feeling may not usurp that sacred name."

A godly man may be exposed to incitements to evil as our Lord was; but so long as he retains his integrity he will answer to every suggestion of the Tempter in the words of Joseph to the wife of Potiphar, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" His desires will tend towards lawful objects; his emotions will be in sympathy with such objects, and his affections will be drawn towards them. His conscience will seek light in God's law, and all his moral powers will conform to its authoritative dictates. Zechariah and Elizabeth were godly characters, and as such *"they walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."* (Luke i. 5, 6.) David was a godly man, and he said, "I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God, therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness." (Psalm xviii. 21, 24.) As the index of the clock indicates the adaptation of its machinery to the apparent motion of the sun round the earth, so the outward actions of every good man indicate certain correspondences which exist between his inward affections and the law of God, which is to him the rule

of moral action. What a contrast the reflecting mind observes between the principles of the godly man in his renewed and in his unrenewed state! He beholds a perfect revolution in the prime movers in the development of character. Formerly all his maxims were of the earth, earthy. They were such as these: "Do not put all your eggs into one basket." "Have two strings to your bow." "Keep your eye on the main chance." "Look sharp." "Money is money now." "If you have a thousand pounds, you can put your hands by your sides and say you are worth a thousand pounds every day of the year." "Take a farthing from a hundred pounds, and it will be a hundred pounds no longer." The Egyptian fable of man being the offspring of the mire of the Nile is well illustrated in the predominant feelings and habits of the natural man. His life is devoted wholly to the acquisition of worldly good. His soul "cleaveth to the dust." Into his soul-house he has admitted scarcely any maxims but those of "Poor Richard." His memory is loaded with these, and such like. He forgets God; but he remembers that "time is money," that "credit is money," that "money is of a prolific nature," that "six pounds a year is a groat a day," and that "the good paymaster is lord of another man's purse." He neglects to take care of his soul; but he takes great care of his money, and of all the maxims that may assist him in its accumulation. He takes care to remember that "the way to wealth is industry and frugality," that "a penny saved is twopence clear," that "a pin a day is a groat a year." He forgets to pay his vows to God, but he well observes the *lex talionis*. He is deeply versed in the casuistry which ordains "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," "skin for skin," and a "Roland for an Oliver." But O! what a revolution in his principles and feelings takes place when, sanctified by Divine grace, he devotes himself to conformity to God's law! His maxims are changed entirely. The predominant maxims are such as these: "The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal." "Lay up for your-

selves treasures in heaven, where moth doth not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal." "Love your enemies." "Bless them that curse you." "Do good to them that hate you." "Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." "Be ye perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." "Keep thine heart with all diligence." "Acknowledge God in all thy ways." "He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

We answer, the term "godliness" strikingly designates true Religion,

3. *Inasmuch as the great earthly model of it whom the godly imitate in all things was the God-man, our Lord Jesus Christ.*

"That example teaches better than precept," is a maxim which has commended itself to men of all times and of all countries. This maxim, valuable in the sciences and in the arts, has always exerted a singularly potent influence in the economy of human life. The Stoic formed his character on the model of his ideal wise man. The *Sapiens* of the ancient was no doubt elevated in conception beyond all that was ever found combined in the actual character of any of the great Moralists of antiquity, but he had blemishes such as are inseparable from the most elevated conceptions of uninspired men. And because he was a mere imaginary being, however venerable, he was not adapted to inspire the deep human interest inseparable from the contemplation of exalted characters in real life. Besides, this character being indicated by general description, rather than by a record of the acts in real life, was ill-adapted to move the imitative powers to action; even less than the characters on the stage, which, though ideal too, are represented as uttering speeches and performing actions.

Now, Christ was a real character. He was no ideal object, but "a real, living, sublime, and faultless" Model of *god-like* virtue. The poets have painted Him with a halo round His

brow, which might be well enough adapted to the scene on the Mount of Transfiguration, but not specially adapted to His every-day life. The evangelists have taken the opposite course. In their narratives of the life and acts of our Lord, they have made Him to throw the halo of glory over His matchless character. As Phidias impressed his own likeness on the shield of Minerva, so Jesus photographed the image of His spotless spirit on the wonderful acts of His mysterious life.

Profoundly versed in the Divine Law, He alighted on this mortal stage with a bloom upon Him which betokened a nobler sphere and a more genial clime. The diadem of Holiness rested on His head, and the long-suffering of Mercy floated in "His languid eye." He went down into the deepest mines of thought, whence He brought up principles to be exemplified by Himself in the loftiest walks of moral action. He was indeed the great Teacher!

We have illustrated the relation between man's spiritual nature and God's law by an allusion to the well-known relation of a clock to the sun's position in the firmament. We come now to observe, that as no clock is so exactly adapted to the sun's motion as to indicate the hour with unfailing precision, so no human conduct except that of our Lord ever was, during the whole course of life, undeviatingly accordant with God's law. But as there are model clocks—that in the Greenwich Observatory, for instance—by which all the other clocks of the realm are regulated, so we have in Him a grand model character, the *Sapiens*—if we may borrow an allusion from the Stoics—of the Gospel, by which we are to be guided in the application of the principles of God's most holy law.

In every mere human character we find particular virtues shining forth with great splendour, while some others, in comparison, are thrown into the shade. Thus we read of the patience of Job—the resignation of old Eli—the faith of Abraham—the earnest importunity of wrestling Jacob, and the meekness of the long-suffering Moses. But in the holi-

ness of Christ we find all the virtues mingling in equal intensity, like the prismatic rays in the tropical sunbeam. It is often said of other noble characters that "there are spots in the sun," but the proof of our Lord's perfect virtue comes at once from friends, enemies, and indifferent persons. It would be superfluous to cite the testimony of His friends, all of whom have testified that He was "without guile." Turn we then to His *enemies*. For three long years the Pharisees kept a watch over His words, His looks, and almost His very thoughts. They, or their compeers, the Scribes, mingled in every scene. They examined and cross-examined His companions, and even indifferent persons. They established an espionage that penetrated into the most private scenes in which He figured. They sent the traitor into the upper room. They went forth under his guidance into the Garden. But when he had received the wages of his iniquity, life was to him a scene of intolerable misery; for he had "betrayed innocent blood." "Pass we on to those who were *indifferent*. And first we have the opinion of Pilate himself, an austere and cruel man, a man of firm resolve, and one who shrank not from the destruction of human life; but we see here that for once the cruel man became merciful; for once the man of resolve became timid. It was not merely that he thought Jesus was innocent; the hard Roman mind would have cared little for the sacrifice of an obscure Jew. The soul of Pilate was pervaded with the feeling that spotless innocence stood before him, and this feeling extended even to Pilate's wife; for we find that she sent to him, and said, 'Have thou nothing to do with that just man.'"

Who can attend to the facts—active or passive—in His chequered history, and especially to the *spirit* which He manifested throughout, without the persuasion that the man of Nazareth was the incarnation of God's holiness?

It is in this light that our Lord's character is presented by the Apostle Peter, who represents Him as "leaving us an example that we should follow His steps." He is the great

model in the portrait gallery of revelation, by imitation of whom the *godly* man aspires to the acquirement of all the lineaments of "a perfect man;" by the contemplation of whom, as revealed in the Gospel Mirror, he "is changed from glory into glory."

But oh! it is an arduous work. He must constantly keep his eye on the Model, and not only so, he must fix on it his intensest gaze. As a mere glance at some great work, though it may be stamped with all the genius of a Raphael; as one stroke of the pencil, though with the boldness of an Angelo; or one hasty sketch of the finest countenance, though it may emulate the manner of a Correggio, will not make an artist, so will not the hasty perusal of our Lord's life and actions in the evangelical record; so will not a listless hour, now and then spent, mould the believer into the fairest, noblest traits of virtue! Nothing but frequent study of the Model, and hourly practice, will raise the imitator to the manifestation of the god-like qualities of the great Original. It is *thus*, and thus *alone*, that "*the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works*," and rises to "*the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus*." In CHRIST JESUS, who is as the "pattern in the Mount" for the man of God—the grand Model, according to which, under the guidance of the Spirit, we are to reconstruct our character, and of which our lives are intended to be so many living transcripts, just as the precepts of the Divine Law are transcripts of the Divine Legislator's own Moral Being.

Permit us further to observe, that Religion is appropriately called "Godliness,"

4. *Because it is the devotion of the whole man to God's service for life and death; in time and in eternity.*

There is something peculiarly noble and elevating in such a consecration; and when steadily adhered to, in the midst of all manner of hostile influences, it realises the idea of the moral sublime in a pre-eminent degree. We have lately had a fine illustration of this kind of devotion on a very different



theatre. In the year A.D. 79 the city of Pompeii, a place of great magnificence and wealth, which stood at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, was buried under a shower of stones, cinders, and ashes, which were vomited forth in an eruption from that mountain. The catastrophe was well known from the letter of Pliny the Younger, whose uncle perished in the general overthrow. But the whereabouts of Pompeii was lost sight of until it was discovered, in 1689, underneath the corn-fields and vineyards in the vicinity of the volcano. Nearly seventy years passed away before the exhumation of this city of the dead was begun in the year 1755. The exhumation brought to light many facts which deeply interested the historian and the antiquary. It was ascertained that the eruption had not been so sudden as not to allow an opportunity to many of the inhabitants to move off with their valuables in the direction of Herculaneum, which seems to have been destroyed by streams of burning lava, when Pompeii was buried with ashes. The most interesting fact, however, to the student of human character is not found in the movements of the fugitives, who, smitten by panic-fear, fled in all directions, but in a number of men who remained amid the scene of desolation, while others took their flight. We allude to the Roman sentinels. These men, under an imperious sense of duty, remained at their posts, arms in hand, while the very elements warred against them. At the end of seventeen centuries, all Europe was supplied with an illustration of the superiority of the sentiment of duty over the desire of life in the hearts of those soldiers in the service of the Cæsars.

You, gentle reader, are engaged, we trust, in the service of a Being who is "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God." Learn, then, a lesson of unswerving fidelity to the Cause to which you are consecrated from these iron sons of Rome; a lesson of unflinching courage and resolution from men whose firm nerves were not to be moved from the performance of duty by death in its most appalling forms. Look and learn, until you can sing with the poet—

“Thy saints in all this glory war,  
Shall conquer, though they die;  
They see the triumph from afar,  
And seize it with their eye!”

Look and learn until you see the hand of “the Captain” of your salvation beckoning you upward towards the eternal throne, and hear His voice utter the final plaudit, “Well done, good and faithful servant!”

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## II.

### DEATH AS VIEWED FROM THE CHRISTIAN STAND-POINT.

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*"I am the resurrection and the life."*—JESUS.

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WHAT a glorious announcement is this! And how admirably the declaration of the glorious privileges of the Saint answers to the high prerogatives claimed by the Captain of his salvation! "*He that believeth in ME, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in ME shall never die.*" (John xi. 25, 26.) "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Death is that melancholy event in which every religion of man's devising forsakes its devotee. Paganism sheds no ray of light on the darkness of the tomb—through no chink does it dart a solitary glimmering of comfort. But the religion of Christ says, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Then, are we to understand that believers are exempted from the common lot of mortals—that they are proof against sickness, and prevented, by Divine Mercy, from undergoing the humiliation of the tomb? No; but that they shall triumph in the mortal struggle. Hear the apostle: "*The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.) It is sin that gives to death all its terrors—that summons up those clouds of horror which overcast the brow of the dying, and that contains the virus of their most dreadful tortures. Alas! how melancholy is the state of that man who, in a dying hour, awakes to the consciousness that he has made the Sovereign Ruler his foe, by living in the habitual violation of His Law! "God," says he, "is not my friend. I am going

on to the grave, and no man can say aught against me; but my *heart* is not right. I want a river like that which the ancients fabled—the river of Oblivion, into which I might plunge, and lose the recollection of what I have been.” All this work, and much more, was done by the Christian before he came to his dying hour. In his penitent state he awoke to the abhorrence not only of what he had *done*, but of what he was *in himself*. He was led to the Mercy-seat, where he found peace with God. He trusted in “the blood of Christ,” and realised in his heart its power to cleanse him “from all sin.” From his conscience the *sting* of death has been extracted, and what to others is *death indeed*, is but *repose* to him. “*I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*” (Rev. xiv. 13.) Take an illustration from the words of the great apostle of the Gentiles, uttered with the prospect of his final hour immediately before his eye: “*For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing.*” (2 Tim. iv. 6—8.) What amazing firmness and constancy we behold in the character of this man! Wherever he went, the sword of Damocles was suspended over him. It had been expected to smite him in his first imprisonment at Rome; but the blow was stayed, in that instance, by the kind providence of God. He was now again in the power of the tiger spirit that ruled the destinies of the Roman world. He had always foreseen that the sword would fall at length; and, persuaded that the fatal hour had then arrived, the heroic apostle exclaimed, “*I am now ready to be offered.*”

Chequered and afflicted had been his “course.” He had been in labours more abundant. He had five times received

forty stripes, save one; twice was he beaten with rods; once was he stoned; thrice did he suffer shipwreck; a night and a day was he in the deep; he was in journeyings often; in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of his own countrymen, in perils among the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold, in nakedness. But the end was now come. The headsman's sword was uplifted; and as Paul advanced to lay his head on the block, he cried out, in pleasing retrospection and delightful anticipation, "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto me at that day.*" Scarcely had these words dropped from his lips when a voice from the throne hailed the martyr spirit as it approached the innumerable multitude of the ransomed Ones, and welcomed it to a martyr's crown and a martyr's throne in these never-to-be-forgotten words: "*Come up hither, thou blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world.*"

Nor was the experience of the apostle singular. All the martyrs have braved Death. They have all bidden defiance to his most horrid tortures. They have all found him a disarmed foe, and been more than conquerors through "the blood of the Lamb." Let us just glance at the final scene, and hear the dying testimonies of a few of them. Hear Lawrence Sanders: "I was in prison till I got into prison." And then, kissing the stake, he said, "Welcome the cross of Christ, welcome everlasting life! My Saviour began to me a bitter cup, and shall I not pledge him?" John Lambert cried out in the mortal struggle, "None but CHRIST! none but CHRIST!" Hugh Laverock, a cripple, comforting John-a-Price, a blind man, said, "Be of good comfort, my brother, for my lord of London is our good physician; he will cure thee of all thy blindness, and me of all my lameness, this day." Doctor

Taylor spoke of his death as a going home : "I shall this day deceive the worms in Hadley churchyard." And, fetching a leap or two when he approached Hadley, he said, "Now lack I but two stiles, and I am even at my FATHER'S HOUSE!" Take another example from Tankerfield, who, putting one leg into the fire, observed, "The FLESH says, 'Thou fool, wilt thou burn and needest not?' The SPIRIT says, 'Hell fire is sharper, and wilt thou adventure that?' The FLESH says, 'Wilt thou leave thy friends?' The SPIRIT says, 'Christ and His saints' society is better.' The FLESH says, 'Wilt thou shorten thy life?' The SPIRIT says, 'It is nothing to an *everlasting* life.'" Finally, take the case of Polycarp, as recorded by Stebbing. "This venerable man was eighty-six years old when he was brought to the stake. His knees were smitten with the feebleness of age; but he was able, notwithstanding, to triumph over a Roman proconsul and a whole multitude of pagans. The proconsul, addressing this worthy, said, 'Swear! and I will release thee. Curse Christ!' 'Eighty years,' replied the venerable man, 'have I served Him, and He hath never injured me. How can I blaspheme Him to whom I owe my salvation?' Some further conversation took place between the bishop and his judge, but it ended in the proconsul's directing the herald to proclaim that Polycarp had confessed himself a CHRISTIAN; whereupon an immense concourse of Jews and heathens cried out, 'Let him be delivered to the flames!' He was delivered accordingly; and the incidents connected with his death are among the greatest marvels and triumphs of Christian history. He refused to be *nailed* to the stake, on the plea that He who had given him strength to endure the fire would enable him to remain firm at his post. The flames ascended with great fury, and formed, as it were, an arch of triumph round his head;" and the whole scene seems to have been adapted specially to illustrate the character of one who was, even in the dying hour, "more than conqueror through Him that loved him." But why do we direct the attention of the reader to the dying testimonies of the

*martyrs*, as if they alone had been enabled to triumph in the final hour? Triumph over the mortal foe is matter of experience in the walks of ordinary saintship too. Of them, as a *class*, the Psalmist speaks, when he summons attention to them in these memorable words: "*Mark the perfect, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.*" Mark him! when racked with pain and almost putrid with disease, as he cries out, "*Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.*" Mark him! when harassed with wearisome days and sleepless nights, he exclaims, "It is the Lord; let Him do as seemeth to Him good." "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, until my change cometh." Mark him! when the props that support the tabernacle are taken out one after another; and observe with what assurance he exclaims, "*We know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*" Mark him! while his heart and his flesh fail, as he cries out, "My heart and my flesh fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." Mark him! while, as Death impresses his mortal seal on his cold, cadaverous countenance, he utters, in feeble accents, these words of glorious triumph, "O, Death! where is thy sting?" Mark him! while—

"Dismiss'd to glory by the hand of Love,  
He bids the lingering moments swifter roll;  
Death is to him as harmless as a dove,  
While floods of glory overwhelm his soul;  
Transplanted to the Paradise above,  
To blossom in eternal fragrance there,  
Not pluckt, but gathered by the hand of Love."

Ah! dear reader! the hour when the bridegroom cometh is the most solemn of all hours. The night of death is the most awful night in man's mortal history. There have been other anxious, memorable nights. The night of the eleventh of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand four hundred and ninety-two, was a memorable night in the history of Columbus

and his companions in Adventure. The great discoverer had ordered a careful look-out to be kept, and himself remained on the high stern of his vessel from ten o'clock, when he observed glimmerings of light on shore, as he supposed, till two in the morning, when the foremost vessel of his fleet of discovery fired a gun, as a signal that Land had been discovered. Not an eye was closed that night; all waiting, with intense desire, for the first streaks of morn in the eastern sky. What a long, tedious interval was that between the report of the gun of discovery and the dawn of day! But the night, at length, came to an end. The day dawned on the 12th of October, 1492, which revealed the great mystery of the ocean—whether it was bounded by a savage wilderness, or by spicy groves and splendid cities. The great navigator had passed through the portals of the West, and chased away the darkness of ages. Soon he and his companions were on shore, surrounded by naked and painted savages, who, though affrighted at first by the sight of the strangers, were soon won over by the address of the white men, whom they looked upon as visitors from the skies. Such a night—but of vastly greater discoveries—is that of a good man's death, at the close of which he beholds, in clear vision, the brightest objects, we will not say in a new world merely, but in God's dominions. And, oh! wondrous grace! these are destined to be enjoyed by him as an immortal inheritance. The sainted Doddridge, in the last moments of his life, with this prospect before him, sang—

“ While on the verge of life I stand,  
And view the scenes on either hand,  
My spirit struggles with my clay,  
And longs to wing its rapt'rous way.

Where Jesus dwells my soul would be,  
And fains my much-lov'd Lord to see:  
Earth, twine no more about my heart,  
For 'tis far better to depart.



Come, ye angelic envoys, come,  
 And lead the willing pilgrim Home!  
 Ye know the way to Jesus' throne,  
 Source of my joys and of your own!"

This devout man contemplated death as a great and glorious change. Not merely a change of place, but of state: a change that brings rest instead of turmoil; fixed security instead of shifting inconstancy; perfect enjoyment instead of the mixture of joy and grief incident to the present life; health instead of wasting sickness; union with Jesus in the world of glory, which shall last long "as life, and thought, and being last, or immortality endures." It was while contemplating death in this last view that Paul spoke of "*having a desire to depart, and be with Christ.*" It was while contemplating it as the avenue to a land where nothing evil was ever admitted, and whence nothing good was ever dismissed, that the Psalmist exclaimed, "*Oh! that I had wings like a dove, for then would I flee away and be at rest.*" It was the contemplation of it under these aspects generally, though dimly intimated to him under the twilight of the patriarchal economy, that Job cried out, "*All the days of my appointed time will I wait, until my change cometh!*"

"Oh! what a blessed hope is ours,  
 While here on earth we stay;  
 We more than taste the heav'nly powers,  
 And antedate the day.  
 We feel the resurrection near,  
 Our life in Christ conceal'd,  
 And with His glorious presence here,  
 Our earthen vessels filled."

The power of this Hope to cheer the heart of the dying was strikingly illustrated in the last moments of the excellent James Hervey. The doctor had told him that he had but a few moments to live. He instantly replied, "O let me spend them in adoring our great Redeemer! 'Though my heart *and my flesh* fail me, yet God is the strength of my heart, and

my portion for ever!’ The apostle says, ‘All things are yours, life and death . . . for ye are Christ’s.’” “Here,” said he, “is the treasure of a Christian. Death is reckoned among this inventory, and a noble treasure it is. How thankful am I for death, as it is the passage through which I pass to the Lord and Giver of life; and as it frees me from all this misery you now see me endure, and which I am willing to endure, as long as God thinks fit; for I know He will, by-and-by, in His own good time, dismiss me from the body. These light afflictions are but for a moment, and then comes an eternal weight of glory. Oh! welcome, welcome death! thou mayest well be reckoned among the treasures of the Christian. To live is Christ, but to die is gain.” He then paused a moment, and, with great serenity and sweetness in his countenance, though the pains of death were then on him, repeated these triumphant words: “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy most holy and comfortable word; for mine eyes have seen Thy precious salvation. Here, doctor, is my cordial. What are all cordials to the dying compared to the salvation of Christ? This, this supports me!”

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### III.

#### THE GRAVE-YARD, AS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL LUMINARY.

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*"He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."*—JESUS.

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THESE words primarily relate to the resurrection of Lazarus. This individual, on whose name the evangelical narrative has impressed the stamp of immortality, was the brother of two sisters, Martha and Mary, who, with himself, were intimate friends of Jesus. They resided in a town called Bethany, situated about two miles from Jerusalem, on the far side of the Mount of Olives. In that neighbourhood were many mansions occupied as country residences by the proud Pharisees of the city; but Lazarus and his sisters seem to have dwelt in a humble cottage, which was often visited by Jesus. Cheered by the countenance of their brother, those sisters found in their little cottage at Bethany a happy home. The members of this small family loved one another, and they were all loved by Jesus. After a while, Lazarus was taken sick. His sisters despatched a messenger to Jesus, saying, "Lord, behold him that thou lovest is sick." Jesus, instead of going to Bethany, as was desired by Martha and Mary, simply responded, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." This he said in allusion to the great miracle which He was about to work for the benefit of this family. But for some days our Lord advanced not towards the humble dwelling which was the scene of sorrow; and these sisters, overwhelmed with grief, said, "He loved us, and yet He tarries." What anxious days were these in the cottage at Bethany! How the sisterly tear trickled down the cheek of Martha and Mary as they gazed on the pale face and listened

to the faint and broken utterances of their brother Lazarus! At length came the final struggle!—the oppressed breathing, the heaving breast, the cold sweat, the stillness, the pallor, the coldness of death! And while the hearts of these sisters were torn with the anguish of their sad bereavement, they could not suppress these words of mild complaint: “*He loved us, and yet He tarries!*” But He had not forgotten them. He came at last, and it soon appeared that the delay had been intended to give greater emphasis to the lesson of Mercy which He was about to teach these heartbroken sisters. And when He reached them, He was told once and again, that, if He had been there when their brother fell sick, he would not have died: a sentiment which was loudly echoed by those who had heard of the other mighty works which Jesus had done.

Jesus, who had already asserted His high prerogatives as the Incarnate God, in these memorable words, “I am the resurrection and the life,” now went forth to snatch the prey from the power of the Foe. He advanced to the tomb where were laid the remains of that brother with whom those sisters had gambolled in their childhood, and whom Providence had made the support and protector of their riper years. He commanded those who stood by to roll away the stone. Poor Martha said, “Lord, by this time he stinketh;” for he had been laid there four days. But what is death! what is putrefaction, in the way of the Incarnate God! He groaned in spirit! He cried, “Lazarus, come forth!” It was enough. The wheels of destiny instantly began to roll backward! “*And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and his face was bound about with a napkin, and He said unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*” (John xi. 44.) If Jesus, as was His wont, retired after this marvellous event to the house of Martha and Mary to share the transports of delight with which Lazarus was hailed when he resumed his accustomed place at their board, might He not have explained all His conduct towards their little family in some such words as were addressed to the ancient

Church by one of the prophets?—"For a small moment" *did I forsake you, but "with great mercy" have I gathered you. "In a little wrath hid I my face" from you "for a moment, but with everlasting kindness" have I had mercy on you.* (Isaiah liv. 7, 8.)

This was a notable vindication of our Lord's high prerogatives as "the Resurrection and the Life;" but the crowning fact was His own resurrection. He had recently passed through that momentous crisis, the agony in Gethsemane! He had been betrayed by Judas! He had been at length apprehended by the officers of the Sanhedrim! He had been denied by Peter! He had been forsaken by others of His disciples! He had been impeached by miscreants fresh from the market of Jewish perjury! Barabbas had been preferred before Him! The streets of Jerusalem had rung with the cries of savage clamour against Him: "Away with Him! away with Him! Crucify Him! crucify Him!" He had been crucified between two thieves! On Him, as man's Surety, had been poured the vials of the Divine wrath! His human spirit had been smitten with a sense of desolation, of which those only can have an idea—and they only an approximate idea—who, in the midst of some intolerable woe, have felt themselves isolated from the whole universe of Being! The temple of His humanity had been assailed by men and devils, and while the human spirit and the Deity withdrew from the scene, the air of Golgotha and the widespread regions in the spirit-world rung with shouts of triumph! "There," said they, in derision, "hangs the predicted conqueror of Death! There hangs the last Hope of a ruined world! the vaunted Deliverer, in all the stillness and pallor of Death!—the royal standard of High Heaven torn, stained, and trampled upon before His face! The Galilean is, indeed, red in his apparel, and his garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat. But is this the hero whom we were to see coming from Edom? Is this the mighty Conqueror whom we were to see coming with dyed garments from Bozrah? Is this He who was to be glorious in His

apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save?" Oh! what concord there was between the sounds of revelry on earth and the shouts of triumph in hell! Herod and Pilate made peace that day. Satan and his compeers felt that the mysterious strategy of forty centuries had been more than vindicated by the great overthrow on Mount Calvary. They had hoped only to enclose *mankind* within the mighty grasp of their *mortal* empire, but now they saw the Son of God stretched in the tomb! It was a sorrowful time for the Galileans—a time of high exultation for the enemies of all good! But their *Io Triumphe* was premature. Seraph guards, though His enemies knew it not, were sent as sentinels to watch over His tomb before the Sanhedrim obtained the guard of soldiers at the hands of Pilate; and the mighty Deliverer, instead of being irrevocably overthrown, had carried the war into the citadel of the Foe, whence he brought back numbers of his captives to grace the triumph of the third day, and celebrated with angelic strains at the end of forty days, in the metropolis of the Universe. We sometimes try to imitate those strains:

"Our Lord is risen from the dead,  
Our Jesus is gone up on high;  
The powers of hell are captive led,  
Dragg'd to the portals of the sky.  
Lo! His triumphal chariot waits,  
And angels chaunt the solemn lay;  
Lift up your heads, ye heav'nly gates,  
Ye everlasting doors, give way!"

Now the apostle announces this as the fundamental fact on which rests the doctrine of the general resurrection. It is the fact on which the saints mainly rest their Hope of a glorious resurrection at the last day. "*Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. As by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*" Our reader will permit us to observe:—

1. The resurrection of our Lord stands in the same kind of relation to that of His people which "the earnest" given sustains towards the promise of which it is the assuring fact. The idea of the earnest of a promise or contract is taken from Holy Scripture. It occurs first in Gen. xxxviii. 17, 18, 20, and is used by the Apostle Paul of the Holy Spirit, as "*the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.*" (Eph. i. 14.) Among the Jews, "the earnest" was intended to give security when a promise was made, or a contract entered into. It was a part paid down in fulfilment, not the whole; it was something of the same kind as that which was promised, and intended to assure those to whom it was given of the due fulfilment of every word which had been spoken, and the rigorous execution of every iota of the engagement made. Now, our Lord had promised to His followers that they should be raised from the dead at the consummation of all things. The promise was given in various forms, and repeated with great emphasis. Take an example: "*And this is the Father's will, who hath sent me, that of all whom He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one who seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up again at the last day.*" (John vi. 39, 40.) True, the promises in question, given to our Lord's early followers, are sufficiently plain to us. But we must not forget that the sect of the Sadducees, founded in the third century before Christ by Sadoc and Baithus, had infused into the Jewish society of that day a deeply-rooted Scepticism as to rewards and punishments, and also as to the resurrection of the dead: so deeply rooted was it, that it was held to be no disqualification for the office of the high priest, that he was of the sect of the Sadducees, even in the times of the apostles. Some years later, there were individuals in the Christian Church, who, full of the Sadducean spirit, objected even to the possibility of a resurrection. To one of these, it is thought that Paul alluded, when

he said, "*But some man will say, How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?*" They saw the constituent parts of the body dissolved by death; they saw the parts of man's physical organisation consumed by fire—dissolved in water, or mingled with their kindred dust; the limbs buried in one part of the earth and the trunk in another; and to them the restoration of the dead out of these remnants of mortality seemed quite as difficult a problem as creation out of nothing. Lost in the labyrinthine mazes of death and corruption, they cried out in their bewilderment, "*How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?*" In these circumstances, was it not necessary that the faith of the infant Church should be fortified with "the earnest of the promise?"

It was so fortified. Christ went down himself into the dark regions of the dead. After Death had carried on a war against Life, a war of extermination for forty centuries—chasing it in all its forms across each earthly scene, as night chases day—Christ suffered himself to be enveloped "in the mantle of its black and horrid midnight." But in the mantle of that black and horrid midnight, He grappled with the Monster at the gates of Hades, and so triumphantly, that when John, to whom we are indebted for some of the promises in question, sketches Him in the Apocalyptic visions, He is introduced as saying, "*Fear not; I am the First and the Last: He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of Hell and of Death.*" (Rev. i. 17, 18.) He did more. By the Omnipotent energy of the Godhead, he not only reanimated His dead body in the sepulchre, but so renovated it, that His people from hence forth not only appealed to the fact for the assurance that the promise was reliable, but joyfully pointed to His glorious body as the MODEL according to which their bodies will be conformed in the last great day. *We know that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*" (1 John iii. 2.)

2. The resurrection of Christ sustains the same kind of



relation to that of His people which "the first fruits" of the earth bear to the coming harvest. He has "*become the first fruits of them that slept.*"

"THE FIRST FRUITS." This expression will not be clearly understood without reference to the "manners and customs" of the Jews. By the law of Moses, "the first fruits" of animals and of the ground were consecrated to the Lord. The Jews, indeed, were prohibited from reaping the ground until "the first fruits" had been thus dedicated. Accordingly in the time of our Lord, the Sanhedrim regularly appointed a number of priests, at the beginning of harvest, to gather a handful of the first ripe corn. Attended by a great concourse of people, the persons so appointed went forth from one of the gates of the City to some near cornfield, and when "the first fruits" had been gathered, they were carried with great pomp and universal rejoicing through the streets to the Temple. Jewish writers say, that "the ox preceded them with gilded horns and an olive crown upon his head, and that a pipe played before them until they approached the City; on entering which they crowned 'the first fruits,' that is, exposed them to sight with as much pomp as they could, and the chief officers of the Temple went out to meet them. They were devoutly offered to God, in grateful acknowledgment of His providential goodness in giving them 'the first fruits' of the earth. 'The first fruits' gave notice to all who beheld them, that the general harvest would soon be gathered in." Paul finds in the relation between "the first fruits" and the harvest a resemblance to that which subsists between Christ and His people, and so designates our Lord "*the first fruits of them that slept.*"

"OF THEM THAT SLEPT." The condition of the dead is, in Scripture, spoken of, in numerous instances, as a "sleep." Two reasons have been assigned for the use of this metaphor. The first is taken from what is conjectured by some to be the state of the soul when separate from the body. The advocates of this view, regarding the body as the necessary organ of

the soul's activity, infer that during the period of its separation from that organ, its consciousness will be so feeble, and its faculties so lethargic, that its condition may be, not inaptly, compared to the state of sleep. The second reason is taken from the likeness of a dead body to one sleeping; or, as some have thought, from the analogy that subsists between the rest and refreshment which sleep gives to the labourer, and the repose and renovation to which death shall ultimately conduct the heir of corruption. The former opinion, we grant, admits of some little plausible reasoning in support of it, but the mode in which the allusion is applied in Holy Writ to the state of the dead, leads us, most decidedly, to the conclusion that it is taken from the body and not from the soul. The expressions "to sleep with our fathers" (that is, in the same burial-ground), and "to sleep in the dust of the earth" as the general repository of the dead, can be understood of the body only. In this way, indeed, the allusion is strictly used in the Gospel by Matthew: "*And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints who slept arose and came out of their graves after His resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many.*" (Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.) Having explained the significance of the phrase "first fruits," and "them that slept," let us now advance a step farther. In the style of the apostle, the bodies of the dead are compared to seed: "*Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die,*" &c. When the soul has departed from the body, the latter is in a few days, like the seed of autumn, cast into the ground. There, like seed in the field, it is covered up with earth, and left to moulder away until it mingles with the surrounding dust. The light of day never pierces its gloom—it is closed up from mortal gaze; for man is not permitted to see what goes on in the sleeping-places of the dead. So it had been for several thousand years when Christ died. Millions upon millions of seed had been cast into the great field of Mortality. Winter had succeeded autumn, and spring had succeeded winter, and summer had succeeded

spring, with unfailing regularity in four thousand and thirty-seven successive instances, according to the common chronology, without discovering to our mortal race any signs of vitality in the seed sown. There had, indeed, been cases of resurrection, but the dead had been summoned forth *from without*. At length, the Son of Mary was cast into the ground. A great change almost instantly took place. When the ministers of the Temple were engaged in gathering "the first fruits" of the barley-harvest, Christ rose from the dead; and while, at the close of about forty days, they were again engaged in gathering "first fruits,"—the first fruits of the wheat harvest, God sent forth the Ministers of the Upper Sanctuary to gather "the first fruits of man immortal from the tomb." Those "first fruits" had sprung up in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and after they had been exhibited to the men of Galilee during forty days, they took them on the Mount of Olives, and carried them to the skies, where they have been stored for eighteen centuries in the Divine Garner, the sure pledge to the disembodied spirits there of the gathering, by-and-by, of the great harvest of immortal humanity, redeemed from dishonour and corruption, from death and the grave! In the Epistle to the Colossians our Lord is called, "*The beginning, the first-born from the dead.*" (Col. i. 18.)

Since this memorable event, men perversely sceptical have been seen, in great numbers, through all the intervening ages, standing at the entrance to the tomb of our common humanity, vainly inquiring, as once did the women on the way to the sepulchre of their Lord, "Who shall roll away the stone?" Philosophy has asked the question; experimental science has asked the question; and superstition has echoed it back again: "Who shall roll away the stone?" O foolish question! There is no stone *now*. It was rolled away eighteen hundred years ago; and the Apostle of the resurrection cried out, "*Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.*" Then the Church began its festival of the Resurrection, and she has taught us to sing—

"Break off your tears, ye saints, and tell  
 How high your great Deliverer reigns;  
 Sing how He spoiled the hosts of Hell,  
 And led the monster Death in chains:  
 Say, 'Live for ever, wond'rous King!  
 Born to redeem, and strong to save!  
 Then ask the monster, 'Where's thy sting?  
 And where's thy victory, boasting grave?'"

3. The resurrection of Christ sustains the same kind of relation to that of His people which the transgression of the first man, and the penalty which ensued, bears towards the condition of his descendants. "*As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*" We believe that the universal terms in this passage, by that canon of interpretation which confines such terms to the subject which is being treated on, must be limited by the *natural* relation which the saints bear to the first Adam on the one hand, and the *spiritual* relation they bear to the second Adam on the other. Nevertheless, we learn from other portions of Scripture, that as death comes to all men by their connection with the first Adam, so the resurrection from the dead comes to all by the mediatorial work of the second Adam.

In various instances we find the apostle teaching that Adam was a public or representative character, whose fate with respect to what are called "chartered blessings" determined that of all his descendants. Thus the saints in common with all mankind have become subject to death on account of Adam's sin. They are not chargeable with the guilt of the first man's transgression; but death is a natural evil, and since they stand naturally related to him in much the same way as the branches to the stem and root of a tree, so they are subject to that law of mortality under which he existed after the Fall.

In like manner, Christ—who, by the assumption of our nature, became the second Adam—was a public character and representative of the race, and in that capacity secured for

all the members of the common family resurrection from the dead. Whether that resurrection shall be glorious or infamous, turns altogether upon our acceptance or rejection of the mediation of the second representative of the human stock. In the fifth chapter to the Romans we find Adam and Christ contrasted with each other in various particulars as to the consequences of the transgression of the one, and of the obedience of the other. Indeed, in the fourteenth verse, Adam, in evident allusion to the representative character of Christ, is called the type or model of "*Him that was to come.*" And in the twentieth and twenty-first verses of the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, we learn that Christ was to His *spiritual* seed what the first man was to all his *natural* descendants. "*As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*" The argument is, that as Adam's mortality involved the death of all his race, so Christ's resurrection involved the resurrection of all his followers. They who admit the first consequence will scarcely shrink from accepting the second.

"The graves of all His saints He blest,  
And soften'd every bed;  
Where should the dying members rest,  
But with their dying Head?  
Thence He arose, ascending high,  
And show'd our feet the way.  
Up to the Lord our dust shall fly,  
At the great rising-day."

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#### IV.

### THE GOSPEL, A REVELATION OF LIFE AND IMMORTALITY.

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*"Thou hast the words of eterna! life."*—PETER.

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WE learn from the apostle, that "*Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.*" Robinson, in his Lexicon, explains the original word, which our translators have rendered "brought to light," as meaning "to give light, to shine; then to give light to, to shine upon; and then to bring to light, to make known." And Barnes, in his notes on this passage, informs us that "the sense is, that these things were before obscure or unknown, and that they have been disclosed to us by the Gospel. It is, of course, not meant that there were no intimations of these truths before, or that nothing was known of them, but that they are fully disclosed to man in the Gospel. It is there that all ambiguity and doubt are removed, and that the evidence is so clearly stated as to leave no doubt on the subject." The word "life" properly refers to conscious existence in a future world. The question was, whether man would live at all, and that question has been determined by the Gospel. The word "immortality" stands for incorruption, incapacity, or decay, and has been construed by all, or nearly all, critics, of "the resurrection of the body." The idea of the apostle is, that these doctrines have been *illustrated* by the Gospel. It is not affirmed that they did not exist before, but they are made plain through the Gospel. The Gospel, then, is the grand agent in disclosing the future states of all the dead, in both body and soul. To it we are indebted for the

emission of a vast quantity of light on the subject; or, to vary the figure, for the concentration of the scattered rays of truth relating to life and immortality.

This it has done, as

1. *A moral luminary for the communication of the light of Truth.*

A luminary in the system of nature is any large object that emits light. Its use in the universe, like that of a lamp in the street, is to make things visible. Now, what the sun is among the planets, the Gospel is in the moral system of the universe. It is the luminary which the Almighty has employed for the purpose of manifesting things unseen, or but dimly seen, by the light of Nature. This is the image under which the Gospel is presented in the passage cited above. What, we ask, could we have known of the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul, but for the light of this Gospel? An opportunity has occurred in the present generation of investigating the ability of unenlightened Reason to grapple with the first of these doctrines,—the resurrection of the dead,—and the result was in no degree flattering to the vanity of the human understanding. The scene of the investigation was in Southern Africa, the investigator a Bechuana warrior, and the reporter of the result one of the most eminent missionaries of modern times. We have in our eye the conference between Moffat, the Apostle of Southern Africa, and Makaba, a Bechuana chief, of savage celebrity, on the doctrine of the RESURRECTION. Moffat found this chief in the midst of his counsellors, and desired to be allowed, without delay, to tell his news. The warrior, in listening to the missionary, caught the startling sound of the resurrection. "What!" he exclaimed with astonishment; "what are these words about the dead? the dead arise?" "Yes," was the prompt reply; "all the dead shall arise." "Will my father arise?" "Yes," he answered, "your father will arise." "Will all the slain in battle arise?" "Yes." "And will all that have been killed by lions, tigers, hyenas, and crocodiles again

revive?" he next added, in a kind of triumph, as if now he had puzzled the setter forth of new doctrines; but Moffat replied, with great emphasis, "Yes; not one will be left behind." The chief, illustrious for war and conquest, after looking at the missionary, turned round towards his barbarous counsellors and challenged them in a stentorian tone, thus: "Hark! ye wise men, whoever is wisest among you, did ever your ears hear such strange and unheard-of news?" And then, turning to Moffat, Makaba, laying his hand on his breast, said, "Father, I love you much; your visit and your presence have made my heart white as milk. The words of your mouth are sweet as honey, but the words of the Resurrection are too great to be heard. I do not wish to hear again about the rising of the dead! The dead cannot arise! The dead must not arise!"

The doctrine of the Resurrection announced by the missionary in his conference with the chief, and with which we are so familiar in these days, was utterly unknown to the most cultured heathen in the days of old, and only partially revealed to the Jewish world. You may be inclined to regard this as a sweeping assertion; but, so far as the heathen world is concerned, it is borne out by every vestige now extant of ancient superstition. No nation of antiquity bestowed so much attention on the preservation of the dead as the Egyptians. Antiquarian research has recently dragged to light mummies which the genius of that people, combined with their respect for the dead, had sacredly preserved amid all the changes of fortune to which Egypt has been subject for the last three thousand years. Yet nothing in connection with these relics has been discovered intimating, in the slightest degree, the belief of that extraordinary people in the doctrine of the Resurrection. But possibly we shall be told, that what is unrevealed by the almost endless folds of the infolded mummy, may be found inscribed on the gigantic tombs which the larger pyramids supplied for the kings of Memphis, or on the smaller ones, in which repose the princes of Noph. To



these monuments we shall go ; to these sepulchres of Egypt's ancient monarchs shall we carry the inquisition on the doctrine of the Resurrection, and we shall, no doubt, discover many wonders, and gather much valuable information in those matchless sleeping-places of the dead. The immense piles of granite, reared at a period more remote than that of the Sesostrian conquests, indicate the existence of slavery in one of the most early seats of civilization. The Sphinx, in the vicinity of the larger pyramids, cut out of the solid rock, to increase by association the effect of these colossal monuments on the imagination of the spectator, indicate amazing powers of genius on the part of the statuary by whom the design was conceived and carried out. Yet, in all these proofs of the sublimity of Egyptian genius and the fertility of its resources, we find no trace of the resurrection of the dead. But the magnificent ruins of ancient Thebes may be thought to promise more favourably to the prosecution of the inquiry. It may be thought that, in the countless tombs of that city of the dead, we may hear more than the mere echo of the patriarchal inquiry, "If a man die, shall he live again?" But no more egregious mistake could be made. Whether you go by the beaten track to the tombs of the common herd of the Theban people, or pass through the gate of kings to those of the Theban monarchs, which stand apart, or examine the paintings, sculptures, and inscriptions on the walls of the very Pompeii of Egyptian antiquity, you will find nothing indicative of any higher belief than that these were "the eternal houses of the dead."

The Peruvians vied with the Egyptians in the care they bestowed on the remains of departed greatness. Their superstition, which regarded their dynasty as divine, moved them to do their utmost to redeem their deceased monarchs from the dishonours of Mortality. They embalmed their bodies with great skill, and then enshrined them in the temple of the Sun ; they clothed them in raiment manufactured from the finest wool of the vicuna, and ornamented with a profu-

sion of precious stones. Round the head was a turban of many-coloured folds, and a tasseled fringe, with two feathers of a rare and curious bird fixed in it. They were seated in chairs of gold, with their heads leaning forward and their hands crossed on their breasts. They were ranged to the right and left of the golden Sun, which blazed on the wall of that splendid temple. It was an imposing but an awful sight. There, the reigning monarch, in his melancholy and reflecting moods, might take lessons of mortality from this most splendid "congregation of the dead." He did go, and more often learnt lessons of pride than of humility from what he saw of his ancestors in the Temple of the Sun. Ah! it was a miserable attempt to rob Death of his victims, and to deprive Corruption of her prey. They could retain the mortal remains of their sovereigns, but life, and all that gave to life its grace, it was beyond their power to preserve. But this miserable attempt to keep death and corruption in check, was not their nearest approach to the idea of a resurrection. They made another, but with no better success, in the bringing out of these monarchs into the great square of the city, on high festive occasions, to receive the homage of the lower classes and the ceremonious deference of the nobles. This was probably the nearest approach to the conception of a resurrection that human reason, unassisted by revelation, ever made in the Western Hemisphere.

Such was the language of Nature from the mouth of an African chief with respect to the resurrection of the dead; and such the state of information in the most ancient nations in the Old World and the New in relation to this great question. Let us now listen to what philosophy, among the Greeks, uttered in the ears of the great apostle of the RESURRECTION. St. Paul appeared in Athens. He published his doctrines in the Agora, and Philosophy, marching with stately gait from her favourite retreat, cried out, by the mouth of the Stoic and the Epicurean, "What will this babbler say? He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods; he preaches

Jesus and the Resurrection." When he appeared before the court Arcopagus, they inquired, with a mixture of scorn and incredulity—"May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?" And when Festus heard of the Resurrection, he exclaimed, "Paul, thou art beside thyself." Now, to show the total incapacity of human intelligence, even under the most favourable auspices, to grapple with this dark subject, we may cite an illustration from one of the most splendid geniuses of modern times: we refer to that man of powerful but perverted intellect, Lord Byron. The poet having closed the mental chamber against all but the light *within*, took up the doctrine of the Resurrection in one of the most matured productions of his fine intellect. And what did his Muse make of it? She paused on the threshold of the subject, utterly incredulous! Soliloquizing on a skull, she said, in mingled satire and unbelief,—

"Look on its broken arch, its ruined wall,  
Its chambers desolate, and portals foul.  
Yes! this was once Ambition's airy hall,  
The dome of thought, the palace of the soul.  
Behold, through each lack-lustre, eyeless hole,  
The gay recess of wisdom and of wit,  
And Passion's host, that never brook'd control.  
Can all saint, sage, or sophist ever writ,  
People this lonely tower, this tenement re-fit?"

Now, to this inquiry we answer emphatically, No! There is naught that "saint, or sage, or sophist ever writ," that can restore the departed lustre to those eyeless holes, or the tenant to that lonely tower. But we know where dwells a power that can do this—a power that shall not only restore, but *renovate* and *glorify* the ruined tenement. That power dwells in our Lord Jesus Christ. "He shall change this vile body, and make it like unto His own glorious body!" Again, in that incomparable chapter of St. Paul, in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, on the subject of the Resurrection—a chapter of which it is difficult to determine

whether the traits of beauty or the strokes of sublimity abound most—he exclaims: “Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

And if Reason in the untutored savage, Philosophy in the sage, with powers expanded in the highest degree by an unlimited access to the archives of intellect, and Poetry in one of the most favoured children of the Muses, have utterly failed to discover the doctrine of the Resurrection, they have almost equally failed of certainty on all the main points in the great doctrine of a future state. Probably, the mightiest intellect among the Greeks was Socrates; and this Colossus of Reason put forth his best energies on the great question of future existence; but with how little success will equally appear, whether you examine his reasonings, or note down his conclusion. His reasonings are given in the “*Phædo*,” the inimitable work of Plato, his most illustrious disciple; but they are much more adapted to remind us of the verbal subtleties of the Schoolmen of after-times, than of the greatest effort of Reason in the most celebrated sage of Grecian antiquity. He says, “A contrary cannot receive a contrary, nor the contrary of that it introduces. What is that which, when in the body, renders the body, living? The soul. Soul, therefore, introduces life to that which it occupies. What is the contrary of life? Death. But the soul cannot receive the contrary of that which it introduces. It cannot, therefore, receive death. But what do we call that which does not receive death? Immortal.” Such is the argument of the illustrious Greek for the immortality of the soul. How the feeble logic strains under the burden of proof! We admire his lofty aspirations; but how unsatisfactory, even to himself, his reasonings were, may be inferred from the uncertainty with which he spoke on the momentous subject in the last moments

of his life. We have been made acquainted with the affecting incidents of the final scene by Xenophon, another of his disciples, to whom he had imparted the secrets of his philosophy, and that disciple represents his master as having said, "I am going to die, and you must live; but which of us shall be in the best condition is unknown to all but God." Plato himself had no better assurance. His words were, "I am not very confident." Take another case. Listen to the great Roman moralist, Seneca, in whom, if in any classic author, the notion of the existence of a future state may be looked for with confidence. Now, this distinguished writer says in one of his epistles, "Perhaps, if the report of wise men be true, and we are received into another place at death, he whom we think to have perished at death is only gone before us." Tully ridicules the incredulity that denies the soul's immortality, but takes care meanwhile to assure his readers, in the first of the "Tusculan Disputations," that he has nothing to say as to the facts either way. The Stoics, though they all allowed it, according to this great writer, as long a time for enjoyment as the life of a raven, yet they denied its immortality. Archbishop Whately, in an admirable essay on this subject, says: "But, in reality, the doctrine never was either generally admitted among the ancient philosophers, or satisfactorily proved by any of them, even in the opinion of those who argued in favour of it. On the one hand, not only the Epicurean school openly contended against it, but one of much greater weight than any of them, and the founder of a far more illustrious sect, Aristotle, without expressly combating the notion of a future state, does much more; he passes it by as not worth considering, and takes for granted the contrary supposition as not needing proof. He remarks incidentally in his treatise on courage, that 'death is formidable beyond most other evils, on account of its excluding hope; since it is a complete termination, and there does not appear to be anything either of good or evil beyond it.'" Tully also, "in his epistles to his friends, if anywhere, he

may be supposed to speak his real sentiments, frankly avows his utter disbelief in a future state, in one sense of the word, viz., a future state of distinct personal existence, percipient of pleasure or of pain." In his dialectic compositions this eminent man, who may be designated the great author of antiquity on the immortality of the soul, after recounting a variety of opinions on the nature and destiny of the soul, attempted a sort of balance-sheet of authorities, but was so perplexed with the difficulties of his task that he closed with this observation: "It is not for man, but for God, to discover which is most true." And after the use of many *ifs* and some arguments, he ends by declaring, that "which is most probable is a great question."

Thus we see that, to the eye of the mere philosopher, there is a black impenetrable screen between this world and the next, which conceals most effectually all the scenes in the region beyond. More than a hundred generations of mankind had successively approached the screen, and tried hard to remove it, but in vain. The spirit of speculation among philosophers had tried fruitlessly to decipher the mysterious characters on the other side of it, while fancy, with its monstrous inventions of poets and painters, as Tully phrases it, had sketched on this side all kinds of fantastic images. But neither the grave speculations of the one, nor the lively imaginings of the other, were able to illumine the gloom of death, or clear up the great mystery of future existence. Statesmen had sought to profit by man's instinctive eagerness concerning what is after death, and cultivated in the common people the belief in future rewards and punishments, but in both Greece and Rome they were as sceptical themselves as the Sadducee among the Jews. To the eye of philosophy the future was an Orcusian cavern, which no powers of reason could penetrate; a solitude, from which no charm of eloquence could draw a response. But when human reason, by the hand of the eloquent Roman, had put forth its last effort, when nothing new remained to be attempted, God gave to mankind

the illustration of life and incorruption by Him "who hath abolished death." The adorable Redeemer not only proclaimed "immortality," but He may be said to have illustrated it by His mighty deeds. He proclaimed the doctrine, and, utterly to silence a cavilling infidelity, He furnished illustrative examples. He did not take them to the gates of Hades, and permit them to stand there and gaze on the myriads of spirits which are constantly darting with the rapidity of thought hither and thither in the unseen world. But He did what practically amounted to the same thing: having the power of the Keys, He went and unlocked the gate, and, looking in himself, He summoned first one and then another of the departed to come back and manifest themselves again on this mortal stage. There was Moses! there was Elias! there was the young man of Nain! there was the ruler's daughter! there was Lazarus!—all of whom came back at His bidding, to supply the sceptics of a sceptical age with overpowering illustrations of His great doctrine of Immortal Existence.

Now, gentle reader, let us pause a moment to contrast the light which the luminary of Revelation casts on this momentous subject with the dark and uncertain sayings of ancient philosophy. Socrates was the martyr of Philosophy; St. Paul was the martyr of the Gospel. The latter, however, met death in circumstances more deeply afflictive than the former; but instead of saying, with the wise man of Greece, "Which of us will be in the best condition is unknown to all but God," St. Paul, in the near view of dissolution, exclaims, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord!" Seneca was the victim of Nero's tyranny. The Apostle John, when writing an Epistle, like the moralist, incidentally mentions the subject of future existence; but, instead of prefacing his sentiment with a "perhaps" and an "if," he says, with the strongest assurance, "*Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.*" (1 John iv. 3.)

This same apostle, St. John, in circumstances which, of all others, were most adapted to sober his mind, if it had been subject to any tincturing of enthusiasm, treats the question of future existence without any of the indecision and uncertainty of the great Roman philosopher. Tully was not able to get beyond the screen, or to draw aside the curtain, but John was. "*I beheld,*" says he, "*and, lo! a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*" (Rev. vii. 9, 10.)

Let us now take another view of the Gospel as the revelation of Immortality.

2. It has done its work of Revelation as a *moral instrument*, which God has provided to assist our mental vision. It will hardly be necessary, we presume, to explain the nature and properties of a telescope, for the intelligent reader will know that it is an instrument to aid vision, and is remarkable for two distinct powers—for a power to magnify distant objects, and a power to penetrate space. We may illustrate its magnifying power by a familiar case. The moon, a comparatively small body in the solar system, is visible to the naked eye. Without the aid of an instrument, you may perceive certain opaque figures on her disc; these, however, are so ill-defined to the naked eye that no precise notion can be formed concerning them. Take a telescope to assist the eye, and how changed the scene! You find a large part of the surface covered with mountains; you perceive that the mountains are of a circular or deep-shaped form, and that the scenery is varied, if not with seas, at least with extensive regions, which are perfectly level, and bearing decided marks of an alluvial character. Take along with this another illustration, from the fixed stars, of the power of the telescope to penetrate space. In a clear evening, without the aid of any optical instrument, you can perceive a large number of stellary



bodies; those bodies, distributed over the whole canopy, you will perceive to vary considerably in brightness. Now, classifying them in magnitudes according to their brightness, astronomers have distinguished seven classes, all of which are visible to the naked eye. Beyond the seventh magnitude no star is visible to the naked eye; for beyond that it cannot penetrate: but in these circumstances take a powerful telescope, and direct it towards a part of the heavens that you have thoroughly explored with the naked eye, and you will discover myriads of bodies, which vary in apparent magnitude quite as much as those seen by the naked eye, and which range from the eighth to the sixteenth degree. Thus you see while, by one of its properties, the telescope enlarges our knowledge of objects previously visible, by the other it reveals what was before invisible. Now, the application of all this to the case before us is very simple. Truth has her canopy as well as Nature; the various principles of knowledge are in this canopy what the stars are in nature—they are seen to vary in magnitude and lustre according to the distance and power of vision. It happens that a large number of these stars of truth, as the doctrines of philosophy, for instance, are situated so low in the canopy as to be perceived by the naked eye of intellect; but others, as the doctrines of theology, are fixed deeper in the canopy, and cannot be discovered without the aid of an instrument. In this canopy, by the use of the Gospel glass, we may descry a great number of brilliant constellations of truth, which cannot be seen by the naked eye of reason. There is one brilliant constellation which we shall name “the Deity of Christ;” another, which we shall call “the Incarnation;” a third, called “the Atonement;” and a fourth, which we may call “Justification by Faith.” There are a great number of other truths, but we have to call your attention to some particular objects. Far away, then, and deeply seated in the celestial spaces, are two twin constellations, and the apostle calls them “Life and Immortality.” Now, God has provided us with an instrument for exploring

our moral canopy, as Galileo invented one to aid our natural vision. This instrument is the Gospel. To it, according to St. Paul, we are indebted for the brighter illustration of the doctrines of life and immortality. Let it not be thought, however, that we mean to affirm that those doctrines of future existence, which are said to have been illustrated by the Gospel, were totally unknown under the Jewish economy, and in the Patriarchal age. On the contrary, we know that the angel often appeared with solemn message to the patriarchs, and that the spectre form, with sepulchral tone, and awful accents, had again and again evoked the fears of the kings and the prophets of Israel. A prophet had seen an escort of immortal Beings convey his predecessor through the atmosphere, like thin air; and his servant, in time of peril, had seen a mountain covered with "chariots of fire and horses of fire." And "the records of these deeds of wonder, when the vision and the prophecy were not yet sealed, had often chilled the blood of those who inquired concerning the days of old." But this brings us to state another fact, that telescopes differ in magnifying power. The Old Testament was the telescope by which the Jew examined the higher parts of the canopy of Truth. By the aid of this instrument, the disciple of Moses became acquainted with the doctrines of "life and incorruption." Owing, however, to the weakness of the instrument by which his vision was exercised, his knowledge on these points was confined almost exclusively to the *fact* of future existence, and of the resurrection. But the Gospel being an instrument of much greater magnifying power, it has revealed things which, under previous economies, "eye had not seen, nor ear heard, and which had not entered into the heart of man to conceive." The Old Testament—it has been commonly thought—contains not a more striking statement of the doctrine of the resurrection than the well-known passage in the book of Job. There we find the venerable patriarch suffering under extreme personal affliction, and under the most groundless aspersions against his character. His mind

filled with the gloomy subject of mortality, and his heart agonized with a wounded character, he, in imitation of his countrymen, and in accordance with the customs of the Egyptians, who dwelt on the confines of Edom, desires that he might have a sepulchral breviae. He utters sentiments of a peculiarly striking kind, in reference to his mortal humiliation and his future restoration, and prefaces these sentiments with a desire that has been paraphrased by an able hand, in the following words: "Who will favour me, that my sepulchral breviae shall now be written in the inner surface of a scroll!—should be engraved with an iron stylus on a plate of lead!—should be for perpetual duration deeply sculptured in the live Rock!" And then he utters that hope of the Resurrection, which has, since the time of Job, been so frequently inscribed on monuments of the dead, and has mingled its notes with those of the funeral bell: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." (Job xix. 25, 26.) But now, we ask, what is the clearest disclosure of the doctrine of "Incorruption" in the Old Testament, in comparison of that clear, beautiful, and magnificent illustration of the subject in all its parts by St. Paul, in reply to the sceptical objection, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is

the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. xv. 35—55.)

These words stand alone in their grandeur. There is nothing equal to them in Revelation itself. And if the brightest statement of the doctrine of Incorruption in the Old Testament be surpassed by the brilliant statement of the truth of the words just quoted, it must be added, they are both eclipsed by the embodiment of the truth in the glorified person of our Lord Jesus. He is the great Model for the glorious transformation of the Resurrection. The qualities of strength, glory, incorruption, and immortality are combined in the spiritual body of the great High Priest of our profession!

V.

THE VAST IMPORTANCE TO HUMAN CHARACTER  
OF A BELIEF IN IMMORTAL EXISTENCE.

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THERE is then a state of immortality, and for the knowledge of this we are indebted to "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God;" to Him who "hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light." This fact alone exalts the Gospel immeasurably above every other production in the vast field of intellectual inquiry. To use the words of Paley in one of the finest passages ever penned, at least by uninspired writer, "Had Jesus Christ delivered no other declaration than the following: 'The hour is coming in the which all that are in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth; they that have done good,' &c., He had pronounced a message of inestimable importance, and well worthy of that apparatus of prophecy and miracles with which His mission was introduced and attested; a message in which the wisest of mankind would rejoice to find an answer to their doubts, and rest to their inquiries. It is idle to say that a future state had been discovered already; it had been discovered as the Copernican system was; it was *one guess among many*. He alone discovers who proves; and no man can prove this point but the teacher who shows by miracles that his doctrine comes from God." (*Mor. Phil.*, Book iii. chap. ii. pp. 109, 110.) This Christ did; for His Gospel not only reveals the doctrine of immortality, but places it on a vantage-ground of certainty, whence it is fitted to exert the most potent influence on the hopes and fears of mankind.

1. Human life, viewed in connection with immortality, is highly important as the beginning of an existence that shall never end. As the traveller threading his way by some intricate pass through the vast mountain ranges of Central Asia, unexpectedly finds opened up to his view the magnificent scenery of Hindostan, the Lombardy of the East, with its hundred navigable rivers and its immense rice fields, reaching from the Bay of Bengal back to the foot of the Himalaya mountains; so the wayfarer in the journey through the defiles of mortal existence ultimately finds an outlet into a vast territory which extends onwards to infinity. Or, to take another illustration: As the traveller journeying northwards from the isthmus of Panama, with the Caribbean to the right and the Northern Pacific to the left, and the Southern States of the New World behind him, suddenly finds the vast savannahs of Central America, and a whole continent, with its unique animal and vegetable products, stretching away to the Pole, so the pilgrim along the narrow isthmus of Time leaves duration without beginning behind him, and is suddenly brought upon a theatre of endless existence which equally baffles description and conception. How gloomy would be the fate of man without the hope of immortality! Man's condition in this life, if there were no hereafter, would be that of a miserable being turned into a cavern under the comfortless necessity of constantly moving forward, with the melancholy assurance that there was no outlet to the light of day;—a cavern in which he was doomed to wander about without any light, except the sparks struck from the flint of his reason, exploring as he might its intricacies until he had groped his way to its farther end, where he must suddenly drop down into a pit prepared for his reception, and be no more seen or heard of for ever! But man's condition, with a future existence secured to him on the high authority of Heaven, may be likened to a person in a cavern, which has, indeed, two outlets at the other end adapted to the two different tracks by which it may be explored. He passes

through its labyrinthine passages, with glimpses now and then of the one or other outlet. At length, if he be a servant of the Most High, he issues from the gloom. What, think you, is his delight to find himself in a region where the day is without succession,—an eternal day? What his delight, to find companions in the ransomed millions who had passed through the intricate mazes of the gloomy cavern before him?—and what his surprise to find himself, after all the cold and gloom of his sojourn, there brought to a region surpassing in beauty and grandeur the loftiest conceptions even of inspired men? Surely, such an issue may well be regarded as stamping with ineffable importance the gloomy passage conducting to the glorious light of day, and that the day of immortality!

2. Human life, viewed in its connection with immortality, is vastly important to the pious, as the period during which the first lessons are taken in a progression that never shall cease.

Just as the child is sent to the dame-school to take his first steps in knowledge, so man is placed on the theatre of probation to prepare for an endless progression. And it is pleasing to know, that even those points on which man is necessarily ignorant, are made by a devout spirit to contribute their quota, in the form of moral discipline, to the perfectibility of his being.

The limitation of his knowledge is adapted to suggest to his heart two highly important lessons,—a lesson of submission, and a lesson of humble trust. The immensity of the Deity is a fact which strikes him at every turn; he perceives that the Divine plans, like the Divine essence, are unlimited by either time or space; but, though he can *apprehend* these truths, they must for ever defy his *comprehension*. It had been infinitely more easy for the prince of philosophers to make his demonstration of the true system of the Universe intelligible to an unlettered ploughman, than for even his gigantic genius to comprehend all the operations of Eternal Wisdom. It were

more easy for a mite so to extend its substance as to fill up the planetary spaces, than for man, with his limited faculties, to grasp the whole system of being, including the Infinite Himself, and to foresee the issue of all the contingencies that shall be determined throughout endless duration. Universal truth, as including the nature and perfections of the Deity, as well as His works, has, of course, the same elevation as the Godhead. The higher parts of this vast system are concealed from us by "clouds and darkness," which may be pierced, indeed, by the Omniscient eye, but are utterly beyond the penetration of the loftiest human intelligence. Man feels that all he can do is to stand at the base, as it were, of the great pyramid of universal knowledge, exclaiming, in the words of an apostle, "*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out.*" (Rom. xi. 33.) It were as much at variance with the fitness of things to divulge many of the secrets of being to man in the present state, as to put the "Paradise Lost" into the hands of a little girl at the dame-school, or the "Celestial Mechanics" into the hands of a squatter in some of the backwoods of America. In the present world, then, humble submission to the Divine will, and firm trust in the Divine faithfulness, are our most appropriate virtues. We must "be still ! and know" that He "is God." We are to remember that "*Secret things belong to the Lord ; but the things which are revealed belong to us and our children, that we may do all the words of His law.*" (Deut. xxix. 29.)

3. Human life is vastly important to all men, as viewed in connection with immortality, inasmuch as it is the period during which man forms a character that shall determine the colour of his destiny for ever.

What the Right Hon. W. Gladstone once said, when presiding as chairman at the competitive examination of the candidates for certificates and honours connected with the Cheshire and Lancashire mechanics' institutions, we may, in



substance, each say of the bearing of our daily life on our ultimate destiny:—It is sometimes said that this life is only a life of shadows and of phantoms. We may safely reply, that whatever it is, a life of shadows and phantoms it can never be; for by shadows and phantoms we mean vain existence, which can neither endure nor act; creatures of the moment, which may touch the fancy, but which the understanding does not recognise; passing illusions without heralds before them, without results or traces after them. With such a description as this, we say over again, human life, in whatever station, can never correspond. It may be something better than this; it may be something worse, but this it can never be. Our life may be food to us, or may, if we will have it so, be poison; but one or the other it must be. Whichever and whatever it is, beyond all doubt it is eminently real. So surely as the day and the night alternately follow each other, does every day when it yields to darkness, and every night when it passes into dawn, bear with it its own tale of the results which it has silently wrought upon each of us for evil or for good. The day of diligence, duty's devotion, leaves us richer than it found us; richer sometimes, and even commonly, in our circumstances, richer always in ourselves. But the day of aimless lethargy—the day of passionate and rebellious disorder, or of a merely selfish and perverse activity—as surely leaves us poorer at its close than at its beginning.

The whole experience of life, in small things and in great, what is it? It is an aggregate of real forces, which are always acting upon us, and we re-acting upon them. It is in the nature of things impossible, that, in their contact with our plastic and susceptible natures, they should not leave us an increase; and to deny the reality of their daily and continual influence, merely because we cannot register its results like changes of the barometer, from hour to hour, would be just as rational as to deny that the sea acts upon the beach, because the eye will not tell us to-morrow that it is altered from what

it is to-day. We can perceive, at least in our neighbours—towards whom the eye is more impartial and discerning than towards ourselves—that, under the steady pressure of the experience of life, human characters are continually being determined for good or for evil—are developed, confirmed, modified, altered, or undermined. It is the office of good sense, no less than of faith, to realize this great truth as we are hurried onward towards our final account, and to avail ourselves of all the means of so regulating its development that at last we may stand approved, and hear the great Taskmaster say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant!”

The events of life are the web which our free-will is constantly weaving into the woof of character, and there is a great deal of devil’s dust put into many webs to make them suit the market.

4. Human life, viewed in its connection with immortality, tends greatly to the elevation of our notions as to the dignity of human nature, and the wisdom of abstaining from whatever must lower our sense of that dignity in ourselves. Some souls are wretched, poor things. If there be a life after death, then, since the body dies, it is clear that the soul must enjoy that life; but if so, the soul is that in which inheres the true dignity of human nature. The colour of our skin, the constitution of our bodies, the estates that we inherit, the names we bear, the rank that we hold, the counties in which we were born, are merely the temporal accidents of being, and determine nothing as to the worth of our nature, which must mainly depend on the faculties of that immortal being which will never perish. As to his bodily organization, man is a mere animal, and must, like the brute creation, soon return to dust; but as to his spirit, he is a busy, thinking, remembering, sagacious, contriving, reasoning being, by the moral affections of which he is constituted to distinguish between right and wrong, and is allied to angels, and destined to live for ever. Whence it clearly follows, that to live according to our bodily appetites, as if their gratification was the chief end

of being, is derogatory to the true dignity of our rational and moral existence. Some of the more enlightened of the ancient heathen had partial glimpses of what is due from man to the dignity of his own nature. Thus, one of the Catos used to say, that "he had a veneration for his own person, and stood in awe of himself, as much as of an assembly, and scorned to do anything in private which he would not do in the streets of Rome." But the most striking lessons on this head are supplied in the holy Oracles—lessons relating not merely to acts, public or private, but to thoughts and feelings—to the moral condition of the mind and heart. And these lessons are all enforced by motives drawn from our immortality. The Bible is the only book that opens clearly to us the influence of vain thoughts and evil feelings in derogating from the true dignity of man, when, like scorpions, they hide themselves in the roof of the higher apartments of his soul-house, or swarm in the lower like wasps, or creep about in the cellar like loathsome reptiles diffusing their venom throughout all its ramifications. Let us exhort you, then, reader, in the words of Archibald Butler, to awake to a sense of your high destiny:—"You are peculiarly, through Christ, an heir of the Resurrection and of Immortality! As soon shall 'the First and the Last' yield His heavenly throne as forsake you; as soon shall God be no *longer God*, as the children of God fail to be 'the children of the Resurrection.' Behold! we stand alone in the creation—earth, sea, and sky can show nothing so awful as we are, with our investiture of immortality. The rooted hills shall flee before the angry glance of the Almighty Judge—the mountains shall become dust, the ocean vapour, the very stars of heaven shall fade and fall as 'a fig-tree casts her untimely fruit.' Yea, heaven and earth shall pass away, but the humblest, the poorest of the saints, is born for undying life! Amid all the terrors of dissolving nature, the band of immortals stand before their Judge. He has made them sharers of His own immortality: the most incomprehensible of His attributes is permitted, according to their

measure, to be theirs! Alone, in a world of weak and fading forms, with all perishing, even to the inmost folds of the skin that covers them, with the most exquisite of the beauties of nature changing—its constancy, the constancy of change—amid all this mournful scenery, they alone are deathless! Millions of ages hence, for aught we can tell, it may be the purpose of God that all this visible Universe shall gradually give place to some new creation, that other planets shall revolve round other suns, that unheard-of and nobler forms of animated existence shall crowd all the chambers of the sensitive Universe with forms of life unlike all that we can dream, that in slow progression the immense cycle of our present system of Nature shall at length expire. But even then no decay shall dare to touch the Universe of souls. **EVEN THEN** there shall be memories in heaven that shall speak of our little spark of earthly existence as a well-remembered history; yea, spirits that shall anticipate millions even of such cycles as this, as not consuming even the first glorious minute of the everlasting day! For these things ye are born; unto this heritage are ye redeemed. Live, then, as a citizen of the immortal empire! Let the reflection of the eternal country be seen on your forehead! Let the **ANGELS** see that you know yourself to be called to companionship with them! Speak, think, act as beseems your high ancestry, for your Father is in heaven, and your elder brother occupies the *new throne there*. Oh! as you read of these things, strain your eye beyond the walls of this dim prison-house to catch the unearthly light of that spiritual world where dwell ‘the spirits of just men made perfect.’”

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## VI.

### HEAVEN AS A PLACE;—A COUNTRY.

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SOME writers, more ingenious than wise, contemplating Heaven merely as a STATE, have raised a question as to whether spirit can properly be said to have *locality*. That it does not sustain the same relations to the material Universe which one portion of matter sustains towards another may be admitted, and that it does not occupy space in the same manner as our bodies do, is also abundantly clear. It is a fact of daily observation, that two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time ; but we know that the Divine Spirit and all human spirits co-exist in the same portions of space ; and as to the other point, it will be admitted that the human spirit dwells in the human body—that angels dwell where Jehovah displays the sensible tokens of His presence, and that the human spirit of the man Christ Jesus occupies His glorified body. What is this, we ask, but the admission that spirits may be *localised* ? Now, if other spiritual existences may be localised, why may not “the spirits of just men made perfect” be localised ? Indeed, the apostle, in the twelfth chapter to the Hebrews, expressly declares their *localisation* almost in so many terms : “ *Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words. . . . But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.*” (Vers. 18, 19, 22.) The two pivots on which the statement of the apostle turns are the words, “ *Ye are not come*”—used by him in reference to Mount Sinai—and “ *Ye are come*”—applied to Mount Sion. Now, if *not* to come, in the former clause, mean not to pass over the intervening distance, then

plainly, the words *to come*, must, in the latter clause, mean *to pass* over the distance. But distance is what lies between one place and another, so that these words clearly imply the localisation of the spirits that pass from one place to another. The style of expression on which we have just animadverted frequently occurs in the sacred writings, in application to heaven and the souls of good men. Thus St. Peter, at the close of an exhortation to diligence, adds: "*For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (2 Peter i. 11.)

The current language of Scripture is adapted to convey the idea that HEAVEN is a *place*. Hence we read of an angel being sent "from heaven" to strengthen our Lord in His great struggle. We read also that our Lord came down "from heaven." We are said "to receive nothing except it be given from heaven." And at the last day, the Lord Jesus will be revealed "from heaven." Again, our Lord taught His disciples to pray "Our Father, who art *in* heaven." He promised unto them, that if they confessed Him before 'men, He would confess them before His "Father *in* heaven;" and at His ascension He is said to have been taken up "*into* heaven"—to have been received "*into* heaven." In like manner, we are exhorted "to lay up treasures *in* heaven," to set our affections on "things above." The saints, moreover, are said to have their names "written in heaven"—to have a great reward "*in* heaven"—an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved "*in* heaven" for them. Finally, they are said to have their conversation in a manner suited to citizenship "*in* heaven," to have "*in* heaven a better and an enduring substance," and to desire "a better country, that is, an heavenly."

The question, Where is HEAVEN? has greatly exercised the ingenuity of the curious, and awakened much interest in the minds of the devout. The WHEREABOUTS of this glorious place was fixed by Whiston in the *Air*, at least for the present.

Some of the ancients supposed it to be in the *Sun*, from the passage in the Psalms, "He hath set His tabernacle in the sun." Dr. Watts rather inclines to the opinion, as we understand him, that the sun and the planets may conjointly serve as the theatre of the magnificence of the Eternal King, and the beatification of His faithful people. The Jews seem to have fixed the scene of this glory beyond the starry firmament, in which the early Christians generally concurred, probably from Christ's being represented by the apostle as having ascended "above the heavens." The eminent Doctor Chalmers inclined to the notion that the renovated earth and skies, after the conflagration, will be the final heaven of the saints. "Out of the ruins of this second chaos," says the Doctor, "may another heaven and another earth be made to arise, and a new materialism, with other aspects of magnificence and beauty, emerge from the wreck of this mighty transformation, and the world be peopled, as before, with the varieties of material loveliness, and space be again lighted up into a firmament of material splendour." Dr. Pye Smith, regarding heaven as the scene of the manifested presence and perfections of God, thought it might be stationary, or trans-positive, or comprehending the whole extent of the creation. Finally, some devout astronomers have thought it highly probable, if not absolutely certain, from the nature of gravitation and other analogies, that all the bodies in the Universe revolve round a common centre, and that this central world may bear the same proportion in point of magnitude to all the systems that revolve in space, as our Sun does to the surrounding planets; that is, it may be as much larger than them all, as our Sun is larger than all the planets in the System of which he is the centre. This they believe to be HEAVEN, or the HEAVEN of *Heavens*, and it is truly a magnificent conception. It places the metropolis of the Divine Empire in the centre of gravity of the whole Universe—it makes the centre of God's *Moral* and of his *Natural* dominion exactly coincident with each other. These are the specula-

tions of great men. Some of them are plainly groundless, others plausible, and the last is one of the boldest conceptions of the human mind. Revelation, however, has supplied no answer to the question as to that portion of space where Jehovah holds court amid the nobles of the Universe. In relation to the *whereabouts* of our Final Home, we must, for the present, imitate the modesty of an apostle, and say, "It doth not yet appear WHERE it is fixed."

But if "clouds and darkness" rest upon the question as to the *locality* of HEAVEN, we need have no doubt as to its matchless glories.

Heaven! O, that is the native home of true bliss. The intensest delights to which God grants us access on earth are not more than the slightest approximation towards the bliss He has prepared for us in heaven. *Here* we taste but of the streams; *there*, we shall drink at the Fountain of bliss. *Here*, we taste, now and then, a bunch of the grapes of promise, which our faith has plucked in Eschol; *there*, our hands shall take of the fruit of the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God. *Now*, when the sun-ray of promise breaks athwart the mists and fogs that overhang the river of Death, we obtain faint glimpses of the land of pure delight on the other side; *then*, we shall know what "it is to be there!" *Now*, we are revived with the fragrant breezes from the other side of the "lion's den," and the "leopard's haunt," among which we have to thread our way, leaning on our pilgrim's staff; *then*, having entered within the invulnerable defences of the New Jerusalem, we shall have peace, joy, and security for ever! *Here*, as Dr. Beaumont used to say, "we have many a troubled, many a cloudy, many a stormy day; *there*, we shall be crowned with everlasting joy and gladness, and sorrow, and sighing, and clouds, and shadows, and pestilence, and tempest, and sickness, and death shall have passed away for ever!" *Here*, in the land of exile, we often, like the captives in Babylon, hang our harps on the willows, and feel as if our stammering tongues could not sing the "Lord's song in a



strange land;" *there*, our harps shall ever be in our hands, praise shall be ever on our tongues, and the raptures of devotion ever bursting from our hearts in the presence and palace of our King! *Here*, our track is through a vale of tears; *there*, it will be among the sweet fields of the "better land!" *Here*, our lot is to have troubles by day and sorrow in the night-season; *there*, it will be to bathe in an ocean of joy, where "there is no night!" It is our lot *here* to grieve under the sufferings of the present time; *there* we shall enjoy "a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory!" Glory in all its forms is poured into the cup of destiny in that happy land.

Limited was the range of future enjoyment in the Heaven of our Scandinavian ancestors. They hoped for nothing nobler than the pursuit of the chase and the foe, and when wearied with that, to drink mead in the halls of Odin. Limited, also, to immense herds of buffaloes on boundless prairies, which should be the everlasting hunting-ground of himself and his seed, were the hopes of the Indian warrior, when Columbus, penetrating "the night of ages," brought America to the view of Western Europe. But the Christian's hopes are centred on a world whose glories are vast, multiplied, measureless, spiritual, immortal!—a world where a divine radiance lights up every scene—where no cloud overcasts the sky—where praise thrills from every lip—where love beams in every eye—and a divine complacency is reflected from every face!—a world where thought reaches colossal proportions, and holy affections pulsate with immortal vigour. Oh, the varied glories that break upon the redeemed in that happy world—the bliss which fills the capacity of a heart, whose raptures run through endless cycles of ardour and delight! "Not a lyre can sound, but all the rest awake in sympathetic strains! Not a note is raised, but responsive joys are poured forth from the lips of myriads." *There*, love is enthroned. *There*, the glorified Redeemer is gazed upon by adoring multitudes. *There*, the vision of the

Eternal is enjoyed! *There*, every tie dissolved by death is restored, and the ransomed family sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the supper of the Lamb! Think of a region where “law has Almighty power, but yet never is called upon to inflict its curse; that is Heaven, the highest heaven, and the HEAVEN of heavens!”

No wonder, then, that Paul and the Christians of his times were wont to exclaim, with such a prospect in view: “*I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.*” How was this? How came it to pass that they set so lightly by the sufferings incident to the present life? Had they learnt the induration of their affections in the school of the Stoics until they had lost all sensibility to grief? Not so. But they were so supported by the grace of God, that their sufferings were not intolerable. Hear them:—“*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our body.*” (2 Cor. iv. 8—10.) The sufferings of the saints were greatly mitigated *then*, and have been in all ages, by the Divine Hand, which pours peculiar consolations into the cup of His people in the hour of their distress. Thus, when the world frowns as a thunder-cloud, God smiles like the sun in his noontide splendour; when the world forges irons for their hands and their feet, God hangs a divine amulet, with a chain of pearls round their necks, as a charm against all evil; when the world presents to them a cup mingled with vinegar and gall, He sweetens it with the honey of His love, and flavours it with the riches of His grace. Thus, He converts pain into pleasure—their sorrow into joy, and their prison into a palace lit up in every part with the glory of His presence. Accordingly, the sorrows of life press less heavily upon the saints than on the men of the world. They suffer the loss of wealth, and what do they say? Is it the utterance of de-

spair? *Paulinus Nolanus*, on the loss of a city, said, "Lord, let me not be troubled at the loss of my gold, silver, honour, for thou art all, and much more than all these unto me." They are bereaved. They deeply feel the loss; but do they say with Phocion's wife, "My jewels are my husband;" or with the mother of the Gracchi, "My ornaments are my two sons?" No. They say with Constantius, "Christ is my precious pearl; my all in all!" or with the apostle: "*I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.*" This method of viewing sufferings and glory, in immediate juxtaposition with each other, was not peculiar to the apostle and the early Christians. We read of one of the martyrs, who said at the stake, "What a small pain is this compared with the glory to come! What is it for one to have a rainy day, who is going to take possession of a kingdom?" We read of another, who, when the rope was being put round the neck of his companion, cried out, as if he were envious of his friend's priority in suffering and in death,—"*Give me that golden chain, and dub me a knight of that noble order.*" And, finally, we must mention Robert Ogner, who, with his father and mother, was burnt on the same day. "Behold!" said he, "*millions of angels about us, and the heavens open to receive us.*" To a friar, who teased him, he said, "Thy curses are blessings." And to a nobleman, who offered him life and pardon if he would recant, he answered, "Do you think me such a fool that I would change eternal things for things temporal?"

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## HEAVEN CONSIDERED AS A CITY.

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THE saint is a pilgrim, and heaven is his home. The Christian is a citizen, and the New Jerusalem is the city of which he is a citizen. The apostle, when dilating on this subject, said, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for *He hath prepared for them a city.*" (Heb. xi. 13—16.) A city as contrasted with the *frail tent* in which the pilgrim dwells is a place of *security*; and while we think of the tent as a *moveable* habitation, which is greatly exposed to rain and tempest, the city-home suggests to our minds with great force the combined ideas of security and of rest. Moreover, as distinguished from the tabernacle, which is often constructed of the boughs of trees with the poles round which they are intertwined, and covered with canvas or coarse linen, a city is marked by displays of skill, ornament, strength, and commodiousness: a tabernacle is a structure which will require to be renewed several times during an ordinary lifetime, but a city will stand for ages. Paul often had the contrast between the tent and the permanent building before his mind's eye, and some of his most exquisite passages turn upon that contrast. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor. v. 1.) In these words the apostle directs the Corinthians to the contrast between the tabernacle and the house,

and in the words quoted before, he strives to fix the attention of the Hebrews on the contrast between a *village* of tents in the wilderness and a *city* of mansions in the skies. "He hath prepared for them a city."

What is it that invests a city with interest? We answer, *Its situation may be matter of interest.*

This is often the case. It is delightful to behold a city on the banks of some broad and rapid river, surrounded by fruitful vineyards and fertile meadows, with some Alpine mountain-chain in the background, rising like a marble colonnade towards the evening sky, the whole suggesting ideas of beauty, plenty, and security. The Psalmist must have felt the power of this kind of attraction when he contemplated the chief city of the earthly Canaan. "Beautiful for situation," says he, "the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Sion, on the sides of the North, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." (Psalm xlviii. 2, 3.)

"That city of the living God," which the believer hails as the pilgrim's home, surpasses in charm of situation every other city in the Divine dominions. It is a city in the skies. It stands in the very "Heaven of heavens," and sustains towards the universe much the same kind of relation as our sun towards the planets in the solar system. This city, with the river of life flowing through the midst of it, raises its majestic towers above all the clouds and storms and tempests which have left the impress of their power on all the other cities we ever saw or heard of. In the midst of it is "the paradise of God," watered by the river of life. How varied is its scenery! How fragrant are its flowers! How bright is its firmament! How magnificent its prospect—commanding, as from a centre, a full view of all the orbs that bespangle those high regions where is enthroned that august personage who, in the vision of the Apocalypse, is proclaimed, "*King of kings!*" From these heights, to which no telescope of science ever penetrated, nor mortal footstep ever

approached, the glorified spirit looks down on the grandest object of the material universe and its vast complement of worlds as only so many lesser mountain heights with deep gorges of intervening space between one system and another. And how multiplied are the attractions above, around, and beneath! Here is the thundering torrent of living water, rushing over the rocky heights into the vale below. There the wandering stream, pursuing its gentle course to the point of its confluence with the great river of the water of life. How balmy is the air! How lofty the flights of the swift-winged beings in the spirit-world, and how sweet their music! In every glen and in every grove the hallelujahs of celestial minstrels greet the astonished spirit. The palms of victory are innumerable! The crowns of glory are innumerable! The white robes of spotless purity are innumerable, and all the other objects indicated in the imagery of the Apocalypse exist in the utmost profusion. The sketches of the prophet of Patmos are now seen in a new light. The palm, the harp, the costume, the river of life, the tree of life, and all the other imagery of John, are not only understood, but felt in all their significance; a significance which to mortals in the present state is too varied for description, and too vast for comprehension. These are things which words, with all their magic power, were never made to describe; things which imagination with its most graphic touch was never made to paint, nor hope illumined, though it be by prophecy, to anticipate in all their fulness. What wonder, then, that the pilgrim's hopes are centred there! that when he thinks of the pleasures there, his heart heaves with desire more than monarch on the eve of his coronation, and his countenance is lit up with hope brighter than that of the combatant whose next bound shall enable him to seize immortal honours. What wonder, that while expecting a summons to such a home, he should look for it eagerly as the watchman for the first streaks of dawn in the Eastern sky! And what wonder,

if, while thus standing on the verge of heaven, his heart palpitates with mingled emotions of rapture and of awe, as did that of Aaron when "he first drew aside the veil" of the awful sanctuary where Jehovah was enthroned between the cherubim over the Mercy-seat. Ah, "it doth not yet appear what we shall be" in the home that we shall occupy in the spirit-world.

It is not, gentle reader, that we are left utterly without ideas as to what is seen and tasted, felt and heard in the celestial paradise; but that there are notes in the gamut of eternal felicity to which our earthly ears are not fully attuned. It is that there are heights on the thermometer of endless pleasures to which our earthly conceptions cannot reach. We are now and then permitted to pluck of the flowers some which overhang the walls of the Paradise above, and to taste some of its fruits; but we must never forget that "eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive" the amazing superiority of the heavenly Eden over all the scenes of earth.

Are we asked again, What is it that invests a city with interest? We answer,—*Its glory may be matter of interest.* The word "glory," as applied to the cities of earth, can only be used in a metaphorical sense. There is nothing of literal glory to justify this use of the word. The "Crystal Palace" has more nearly realised this in connection with our own metropolis than any other structure ever did. When it first sprung up like an exhalation, it was a surprising object. It still impresses us as the most glorious of the works of man. As you approach it, fresh from the murky atmosphere of the city, and behold its terraced roofs rising one above another, and its finely-arched transept apparently just dropped down upon it from the skies, with the sunbeams playing upon every part of the magnificent fabric, you are apt to feel as if you gazed upon a creation of imagination rather than of human power and skill. But analyze its materials, and the spell it broken. You will find that this splendid structure, which in

the rays of the setting sun has been so often transformed into the likeness of some "vast temple of gold and of rubies," really consists of sea-sand, soda or potash, wood and iron, combined with a few stones and a little baked clay. So vulgar is the origin of this most splendid fabric, which puts the Alhambra and every other work of man into the shade.

But such is the glory of this city of the redeemed, that "they have no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. xxi. 23); that is, from the throne of God and the person of the God-man, there break forth streams of glory, which reduce the combined glories of all the other objects in heaven to nothing. What a scene must have greeted the eyes of the first group of ransomed spirits that were conducted to the skies immediately after our Lord took His seat, in this great city, at the right hand of God! And with what transports of delight have all others since entered through the gates into this glorious city! We have sometimes tried, assisted by the faint intimations of Scripture, to realise in anticipation the ravished feelings with which the saint at death enters on his glorious inheritance. As he enters upon that inheritance, he beholds a sea of glory reaching from the portals of heaven towards the throne of God. As he advances over the heavenly plains, new and brighter scenes break on his astonished view. He beholds the eternal city surrounded by impregnable bulwarks, and constructed apparently with the object of hurling defiance at the universe in arms. It is the city in which Jehovah holds court amid the peers of creation. It is one grand palace, each apartment of which is a mansion, and occupied by some member of the ransomed family. On its highest mount stands the throne of the Divine Father and the Eternal Son, bathed in a sea of glory.

One of the English reformers, when beholding some scattered rays of this glory shooting athwart the troubled sky of his disturbed times, cried out,—



"O princely palace, royal court!  
Monarchial seat, imperial throne!  
Where King of kings and Sovereign Lord  
For ever ruleth all alone.  
Thy sun knows no eclipse nor cloud,  
Thy moon doth never wax nor wane;  
God and the Lamb hath thee endued  
With glory we can ne'er explain."

Is the question repeated, What is it that invests a city with interest? We answer,—

*Its riches* may be matter of interest. Now the riches of a city may be inferred from the materials of which it is built, and the beauty and grandeur with which they are compacted together in the formation of its lofty structures. Thus, the riches of Rome during the Augustan age were indicated by the noble edifices which sprung up during that period. Historians have glorified the name of Augustus, by calling attention to the fact that he found Rome brick and made it marble. What shall we say, then, of the riches of a city of amazing extent, which has in its foundations twelve rows of precious stones reaching all round it? What of the riches of a city whose twelve gates, each of colossal dimensions, are twelve massive pearls, while its towering walls are all of jasper? What of the riches of a city, whose habitations are mansions glistening like crystal on either side of streets that are paved with pellucid gold?

The inspired penmen are keenly alive to the manifold attractions of beauty, grandeur, and riches in the cities of this earth, but they evince an intense delight in contemplating the city in the skies, which Jehovah has constituted the metropolis of His Empire. In their description of this city they stretch imagination to its utmost tension, and utterly exhaust all the resources of language. And what a magnificent result do we behold in the Apocalyptic sketches! What a sight is "the city of God," as sketched by the pencil of the exile of Patmos! Its walls are jasper! Its gates are pearls!

Its foundations are of all manner of precious stones! Its streets are of pure gold, as it were transparent glass! Its streams are pure water of Life, clear as crystal! Its light is like that of jasper-stone, clear as crystal! Its gates are not shut by day; for there is no night there! It is the Holy City, from which is excluded all abomination, and into which is brought the glory of the nations! Its inhabitants are all the sons of the King—a royal race, who reign for ever!

Then, again, its gates are *twelve*! Its watchmen are *twelve* angels! Its foundations are *twelve*! Its memorial names inscribed on the foundations are *twelve* Apostles of the Lamb! Its length is *twelve* thousand furlongs! Its breadth is *twelve* thousand furlongs! Its height is *twelve* times *twelve* cubits! And among its ransomed inhabitants are found the sealed of the *twelve* tribes of Israel, to the number of *twelve* times *twelve* thousand, who stand before the throne clothed in white robes, with palms in their hands, and crowns upon their heads! Oh! how mean are all the cities of this beggarly world in comparison of this city of gold, pearls, and precious stones, of which God Himself was at once the Architect and the Builder!

The riches of the city may also be inferred from the costume of its inhabitants; the general use of linen, furs, and silks among mortals, being commonly regarded as indicative of the wealth of a Community. Poor indications these! What is linen but the fibres of a plant woven into a fabric to cover the nakedness of man? Again, what are furs but the skins of wild beasts converted into garments to keep the human animal warm? And what is silk but a secretion of a silkworm, converted into a covering, and so embroidered as to glorify the vanity of the human worm? In heaven, these mean earthly exponents of the riches of the city are unknown. The redeemed go forth clothed in robes of righteousness, and on their heads are crowns of gold. While thus descanting on these signs of the riches of heaven, which would attract the attention of each observer as he should pass through the

streets of the New Jerusalem, it must never be forgotten that the spiritual riches of the heaven of heavens are the chief treasure. In allusion to this, good Thomas Brookes says,—“To be able to call God mine, is more than if I were able to say that ten thousand worlds, yea, and as many heavens, were mine; for it is God alone that is the sparkling diamond in the ring of glory.” “Heaven would be but a low thing without God,” saith Augustine.

Does the reader inquire, What is it that invests a city with interest? We answer,—

*Its stability* may be matter of interest. How wanting in this quality are all the structures of earth! The poet Armstrong, in a poem, which is probably the most successful attempt to incorporate science with poetry, rises from the contemplation of the effects of time on the human body, by easy and majestic flight, to the universal structure of earthly things, on which he finds everywhere traces of decay:—

“What does not fade? The tower that long had stood  
The crash of thunder and the warring winds,  
Shook by the slow but sure destroyer, Time,  
Now hangs in doubtful ruins o'er its base,  
And flinty pyramids, and walls of brass,  
Descend; the Babylonian spires are sunk;  
Achaia, Rome, and Egypt, moulder down.  
Time shakes the stable tyranny of thrones,  
And tottering empires crush by their own weight;  
The huge rotundity we tread grows old;  
And all those worlds that roll around the Sun,  
The Sun himself shall die.”

Thus we are reminded by the muse of Armstrong that Thebes and Memphis, Tyre, Nineveh and Babylon, are all gone. There was one proud city of antiquity, of which its citizens vaunted that it was “the eternal city,” but it too is in ruins. The fruit-tree blossoms within its nodding arches, and the poppy—the plant of oblivion—grows in the midst of imperial baths, and within a few paces of the Colosseum, the

noblest of its ruins. So vain is the boast of immortality with respect to any of the works of man. But there is a city that hath foundations—an “eternal city” in the heavens. Utterly frail and insignificant are the proudest structures of earth when contrasted with that city of the living God. Babylon and Nineveh, cities of the remotest antiquity, after a brief period of glittering magnificence, vanished from the topography of the globe so completely, that, until a few years ago, the most curious were unable to point to a single trace of their former grandeur, or to any memorial even of their former existence. They had passed away like the baseless fabric of a vision. And though Thebes and Rome survived, it was in *ruins*. They still survive, indeed, but it is as vestiges of a former world rather than as integral parts of the present system of things. They still interest us, but it is no longer by noise, by glory, and by arms. Nor are they the great body of mankind that are interested. They are only a few travellers from the great centres of modern civilization, who go forth inspired by a desire to behold—on the classic ground where once it flourished—a civilization which has long since passed away; or they are the curious and the sentimental, who wish to peruse, on the spot, their tablets engraven by the hand of Time, made more distinct and legible by an “Old Mortality” unknown to romance, who has survived through the whole period of their history, as if on purpose to chisel out ruin, and to throw on each surrounding scene the waters of Lethe, until they now serve only to point a moral or to adorn a tale.

What a different destiny has attended the city in the skies ! At the close of sixty centuries, this city of the great Invisible, in striking contrast to them all, stands out in its pristine grandeur, equally impregnable to violence and decay. Nor is it merely that it stands unshaken amid all the changes of the universe, the noblest material monument of the great Creator. For as the cycles of immortality revolve their courses, new scenes of beauty, fresh traces of grandeur, greet the astonished

eye. New mansions for new citizens are constantly rising up in the marvellous developments of the New Creation at the feet of Him that sitteth upon the throne! "*In my Father's House are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself.*" (John xiv. 2, 3.) Public plunderers, under the name of heroes, have, in the course of ages, pillaged the treasure-troves of nearly all the imperial cities of history: old Time has followed in their footsteps, and finished the havoc which their ruthless hands had begun; but it is still true of the heavenly City, that there "moth doth not corrupt, and thieves do not break through nor steal." The inheritance of an immortal and spotless race, it is "incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away." Disease at the end of threescore centuries has converted the cities of this earth into vast receptacles of mortality; but, in *that city*, the inhabitant never says, "I am sick!" There is no more pain. No funeral dirge ever mingles its discordant notes with the songs of ransomed millions! No funeral bell ever tells of some incursion of death across the frontiers of immortality! No sepulchre, even of "holiest relics," is ever found gleaming on the everlasting hills! There is no more death! "The former things have passed away," and He that sitteth on the throne saith, "Behold, I create all things anew." Time, that has shaken the foundations of all the cities of the ancient world, would expend its forces in vain on this eternal city. His artillery would vanish like a mountain mist. His mightiest efforts, although supported by the concentrated energies of the whole empire of Evil, would fail to shake a single stone of its foundations, or to make the faintest impression on its impregnable defences. Well might an intimate friend of ours lisp with his dying breath these words of the sainted Wesley:

"How happy then are we,  
Who build, O Lord, on Thee!

What can our foundation shock ?  
Though the shatter'd earth remove,  
Stands our city on a rock,  
On the Rock of heavenly love.

A house we call our own,  
Which cannot be o'erthrown ;  
In the general ruin sure,  
Storms and earthquakes it defies ;  
Built immoveably secure,  
Built eternal in the skies."

The wall of this city is "great and high," and the gates are represented as being not "shut at all by day," to symbolize the impregnable security of a place into which no enemy can ever enter.

Still the question recurs, What is there in a city that may invest it with interest ? We answer,—

Its *population* may be matter of interest. An eloquent writer, in reference to our great metropolis with its 3,000,000 of people, tells us that we must say the *NATION* of London, not the *city* of London. But, after all, ancient Rome with her 4,000,000 of people, and possibly half as many more, and not London, commands his highest admiration. "Rome," says he, "had her prerogative tribe ; the earth has its prerogative city, and that is Rome." Our highest admiration is excited by another city, and, adopting this prerogative notion, we may say that the universe has, in the most eminent sense, but one *prerogative city*, and that is the *Heavenly Jerusalem* ;—only one *prerogative people*, and these are the saints of the Most High. Hear the apostle, who had been translated into the third heaven, on the privileges of this *city* and its people. "But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels ; to the general assembly and Church of the first-born who are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New

Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. xii. 22—24.)

Here we have a lucid description of the city and its population, and in a connection, too, which suggests a striking and instructive parallel in some particulars, in others *contrast*, between the heavenly and the earthly *Jerusalem*. Let us recount a few of the points of comparison or of contrast. The key-word in this remarkable passage is "*Sion*"—*Mount Sion*, *Mount Sion* in the *heavenly Jerusalem*! As on the earthly mount of that name, there were two eminences, one of which was occupied by the Temple with its theocratic throne in the *holiest of all*; and the other by the royal palace with "the set thrones of the kings of the house of David"—(Psalm cxxii. 5); so on the heavenly *Sion*, we behold two thrones, one of which is filled with the tokens of the presence of "God the Judge of all," and the other by the glorified humanity of the Mediator of the new Covenant. As thrice a year the males of the Jewish Church came up to the solemn festivals celebrated on the *earthly Sion*, so all the Saints, after the toils and perils of the pilgrimage are past, meet together on the *heavenly Sion*, as "the general assembly and Church of the first-born," not to go down again for ever. We may further observe, that as the *earthly Sion* was situated in the earthly *Jerusalem* to indicate God's gracious disposition to have His chosen people near the spot whence He gave forth to the house of Aaron the brightest earthly manifestations of Himself, so the *heavenly Mount Sion* is situated in the midst of the *Jerusalem above*, that He may there give forth to His worshippers—"the spirits of just men made perfect"—the brightest manifestations of the majesty of His power and of the glories of His holiness to be found anywhere in the *universe*. As *Mount Sion* in the *Jerusalem below* was the scene of the typical sacrifices, presented on great occasions by the high priests of the line of Aaron, so the heavenly *Sion* in the *Jerusalem above* is the scene where the Mediator of the new Covenant, the great High Priest after the order of

Melchisedec, pleads in the immediate presence of God the merits of that blood of sprinkling which "speaketh better things than the blood of Abel." While the worshippers on the earthly Sion in the Jerusalem *below* were the devout of *one* nation only, the worshippers on the heavenly Sion in the Jerusalem above are "a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." In "the Holiest of All" on the earthly Mount Sion, the high priest only saw the symbolic form of the cherubim, to indicate the interest which angels took in the worship of the tabernacle first, and afterwards of the temple; but "in the city of the living God" every priest of this royal priesthood beholds "the innumerable company of angels" as in concert, with "the great multitude" of ransomed beings "which no man can number," they join to chaunt the high-sounding praises of our God and the Lamb.

The apostle speaks of the saints having "their names written in heaven." In the most famous earthly cities there is a registry of citizenship. Each citizen's name is inscribed in that register. So it is "in the city of the living God." A register is kept in the Book of Life, and every citizen has a certificate of his citizenship given unto him prior—sometimes long prior—to his being escorted thither on the pinions of angels, his guard of honour. Hence they sing of their citizenship while they are yet in the wilderness:—

"Jerusalem, my happy home,  
Name ever dear to me!  
When shall my labours have an end,  
In joy, and peace, and Thee?"

The remarkable personages classed in the roll of citizenship sometimes reflect a peculiar glory on the city itself. A city may be more honoured by the deeds of an illustrious citizen than he by enrolment as a member of the civic community. The great Earl of Chatham conferred more honour on the city of London than he received from it, when the honour and



immunities of citizenship were conferred on him by its civic board,—the first in all the world. Now this cannot be said of the city in question. With one illustrious exception, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, the citizens of the new Jerusalem receive all the honour and confer none. But He is a Being so great, so infinitely meritorious, as to command the homage not only of “the angels, and the beasts, and the four-and-twenty elders,” but also of the great multitude of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation whom “He has made kings and priests unto God.” This adorable Being, since He took our humanity up to the throne of heaven, has been the chief object of attraction in the celestial City. Prior to that, the saints thought of entrance into heaven as being carried by angels to “the bosom of Abraham,” or as “sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” But since the Ascension of Jesus, they have regarded heaven as that favoured spot in the Divine dominions where they will enjoy the most intimate converse with their Lord. In Paul’s words, “to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord;” it is “to be with Christ, which is *far better*.” Nor was the apostle singular in his views and feelings on the subject. Bernard would rather have enjoyed Christ in “a chimney-corner than have been in heaven without Him.” And Luther’s excited feelings gave utterance to a still stronger expression: “he had rather be in hell with Christ than in heaven without Him!” The presence of our adorable Jesus is the most cheering thought in contemplating the society of the place. In Him mingle all the varied forms of grace and of virtue to be found in the heavenly community of saints and of angels, an immensity of fulness, in a transcendency of intensity! His virtues and graces are as unsearchable as His wisdom. Dr. Thomas Goodwin, in transports of gratitude, adores His matchless grace, as having written, in characters of blood, the name of each member in the society of the faithful on the mansion prepared for him in His “Father’s house!” You might, in

that celestial registry of which Christ is the first, find the name of Abel, the name of Enoch, and the name of Noah. You might find the names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the names of Lot, of Job, of Moses, and of Aaron! There you might find the name of each individual in the goodly fellowship of the prophets! You might find there the name of each individual in the glorious company of the Apostles! You might find the names of the noble army of Martyrs, and of the holy Church throughout all the world; the names of them all “written in heaven.”

What delightful scenes must the redeemed, with their “sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies,” present on high festive occasions! We sometimes almost imagine that we behold the sight:—

“ *There* David stands with harp in hand,  
As master of the choir;  
Ten thousand times that man were blest,  
That might this music hear.

*Te Deum* doth saint Ambrose sing,  
Saint Austin doth the like;  
Old Simcon and the exile John  
Have their harps to strike.

*There* Magdalen hath left her moan,  
And cheerfully doth sing,  
With blessed saints, whose harmony  
In every street doth ring.

*There* Mary sings *Magnificat*,  
With tune surpassing sweet;  
And other virgins bear their part  
In songs around her seat.

*There* through the street, with silver sound,  
The flood of life doth flow;  
And evermore do songs abound,  
As there the thrilling joys o’erflow.”

No wonder that the sainted Payson, in the last hours of life, when he lay stretched on his death-bed, awaiting his summons to this glorious city, with its illustrious companionships,

should communicate, in a brief note to a friend, those never-to-be-forgotten words, "Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I should date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me. Its odours are wafted to me. Its sounds strike upon my ears. Its spirit is breathed into my heart! Nothing separates me from it but the river of Death, which now appears but an insignificant rill that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission. The Sun of Righteousness has been gradually growing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as He approached, and now He fills the whole hemisphere, pouring forth a flood of *glory* in which I seem to float, like an insect in the beams of the sun, exulting yet almost trembling while I gaze on the excessive brightness, and wondering with unutterable amaze why God should deign to shine upon a sinful worm. A single heart and a single tongue are altogether inadequate to my wants. I want a whole heart for every separate emotion—a whole tongue to express that emotion!"

Again the question is proposed—What is there in a city that may invest it with interest? We answer—

Its *civil order* may be matter of interest. Whatever may be the architectural beauties, whatever the romantic situation or teeming population of a city, it will be found wanting in an element of the utmost importance to its well-being, if in it there exist not wise and good regulations, supported by the opinion of the public.

In the city of the Living God there exists order divinely regulated. You may go *round* about the city; you may pass through every street; you may closely observe the mansions in its spacious squares, and on its beautiful terraces, and you will find in every scene traces of high intelligence, and unspotted virtue, and perfect bliss. Wherever in the golden streets you meet the members of the ransomed race, now made "kings and priests unto God," you will see the palm of

victory in the hand, the crown of glory on the head, and on the breast, in the best caligraphy of the Spirit, inscribed "*Holiness to the Lord.*"

How different are the scenes in this city from those Christian Charity mourns over in the towns and cities of earth! Strange as it may sound to persons whose minds have never soared to the skies on the wings of devotion, and in the atmosphere of revealed truth, we can assure you, gentle reader, that you might search the new Jerusalem from end to end, with the piercing eye of an Archangel, without finding a murderer, an unclean person, or an individual afflicted in any way with the leprosy of sin! You might go down from Mount Sion to any one of the twelve gates of the city, and back again a thousand times, and not hear an oath—not a profane word—not so much as a lie, nor even a make-believe! You could not find a single haunt which marauder might infest; nor a corner where baseness might perpetrate its deeds of fraud, or falsehood and malice concoct their hateful slanders! You could not find a lazaret-house, not a cemetery, nor a charnel-house within its bounds!

This great city opened its gates 6000 years ago, as the receptacle of sanctified humanity; and though during this interval "a great number, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," have entered it, yet no voice of lamentation has ever been heard among its congregated myriads—no scene of violence has ever been witnessed—no pang of remorse has ever been felt, nor even an approach been detected towards the slightest touch of grief that ever ruffled the equanimity of the human soul! No sound of giddy mirth, of revelry, or of cruelty was ever heard there, even in the faintest echo. Love beams in every face, and the oldest inhabitant will tell you that he has never witnessed, either in word or look or deed, any indication of malign feeling, or even of cold indifference. This is the largest civic community in the universe, and yet you could not find a court-house, nor a prison, nor even a sponging-

house in any part of the city ! The Civic Body is made up of two distinct classes of Intelligences ; but the utmost concord, the most perfect order, prevails everywhere. They are the most holy and the most happy, the most loyal and the most glorious beings under the sway of "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God."

Nor will you be astonished at this when you look at the inscription over each of the City gates : "There shall in no wise enter *HERE any* thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." You will not be astonished at this when, moreover, you reflect that this is "the high and the lofty place" which is occupied by Him "whose name is *Holy*;" "the place of His habitation, the habitation of His *Holiness* and *Glory*;" "the city of the living God, and the heavenly Jerusalem." (Isa. lvii. 15; Psalm xxxiii. 14; Isa. liii. 15; Heb. xii. 22.) You will not be astonished when you remember that the inspired Minstrel of Israel, when singing of this City-home, said, "In Thy presence is fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore."

Are we asked again, What is there in a city that may invest it with interest ? We answer—

Its *temples* may be objects of deep interest. So it was in Thebes, in Rome, and in Athens. The last of these cities, which occupied a foremost place, both for extent and beauty, among the cities of Greece, derived her chief glory from the riches and magnificence of her temples. In the Cecropia stood many objects which attracted observation by their beauty, splendour, and other kinds of interest. Its situation on a beautiful table-land, stretching over a rocky eminence, surrounded by olive-trees, was charming in a high degree. But this upper city, though ornamented with an endless variety of edifices, statues, and monuments, could boast of no structures at all comparable with the temples. Passing by the temple of Neptune, and the chapels of *Jupiter Soter* and of *Minerva Sotaira*, we may direct attention to the Parthenon, which stood in the midst of the plain, with a statue of *Minerva*, of

most exquisite workmanship, by the hand of Phidias, as the noblest object in a city where the Graces and Muses fixed their most loved abode. Behind this most celebrated monument of architecture and of sculpture—the sister art—was situated the Treasury of Athens; but the glory of this famous building, with more than a thousand talents in its treasures, was cast into the shade by the superior splendour of a temple devoted to the worship of the virgin goddess.

The city of Jerusalem, in like manner, derived its chief glory from the Temple which stood on Mount Sion. The city was famed for its situation, for its towers, for its baths, and for its palaces; but its chief glory was from that snowy-glittering structure which Solomon built, and consecrated to the worship of the God of Israel—a structure which was marble *without*, and gold and cedar *within*, and formed by far the most attractive object in a city of singular attractions. Thomas Adams has described it in his own quaint style, as “the wonder of the world, a white and glorious monument set on the hill of Sion, inviting passengers to see it, and amazing their eyes when they behold it.” (Works, vol. ii. p. 285.) In this temple, which glorified Jerusalem infinitely more than did all its wealth and art, Jehovah dwelt in the cloud over the Mercy-seat, in “the holiest of all.” There, during a long succession of ages, the High Priest approached the shrine of the condescending God. Thence was the eye of Divine mercy directed towards the penitent who cried out, “God be merciful to me a sinner!” There, in the exercise of an implicit trust, the broken-hearted sinner lost his guilt and found pardon; lost his sense of alienation, and rose up to a lively sense of his acceptance with God! Thence He issued His mandates to Israel both as to peace and war. Thence He sent forth the deep utterances of His heart in overtures of mercy to all mankind.

There is another city that has its temple. There Jehovah reveals Himself to the beings who dwell in the higher regions of the spirit-world. In the visions of the Apocalypse, we

read both of a temple and of no temple in the city of the Eternal King. In the sense in which there was a temple in the *earthly* Jerusalem, there is "*no temple*" in heaven: that is, no particular edifice devoted to worship; nor are the manifestations of Jehovah confined to any particular spot, to the exclusion of all others. True there is a local symbol, but the glory is not confined to the throne of God—it breaks forth and penetrates every corner of the great Metropolis. True it is that, where thrones tower above thrones, and platforms of glory rise tier above tier, His throne towers above them all on a platform so lofty, that its great use seems to be the symbolizing of the Divine Supremacy. The noblest seraph rises only to the footsteps of His throne. He speaks, and the most exalted of the principalities look up with reverence towards Him as the high and lofty One, who "*humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven.*" He is said "to sit in heaven." He dwelleth "*on high!*" Heaven is His throne, the place of His majestic presence, and it is this that constitutes the whole city one vast temple, which is continually devoted to His worship. "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple." (Rev. vii. 15.)

This symbolic manifestation of the Deity was called by the Jews "The Shekinah." This was the most sensible token of the Divine glory in the early days of the Hebrew Theocracy. It rested over the propitiatory and between the cherubim in the form of a cloud. Its first appearance to the Jewish Church was in the tabernacle of Moses, into which it descended on the day of Consecration. It was translated into the temple of Solomon at the dedication of that splendid edifice to the worship of the true God. It was the special presence of the Deity which constituted the structure reared by King Solomon, the house of God. So it is with respect to this City-temple. It is the special presence of Jehovah, indicated by a glorious symbol to be seen nowhere else in the Divine dominions, that constitutes it

pre-eminently the *Temple* where the "innumerable company of angels," and "the general assembly and church of the first-born," may perform their acts of devout adoration before Him who liveth for ever and ever. What "the *Holiest* of all" was to the land of Judea, so is this temple to the entire Universe. What Jehovah said of Solomon's temple is true, with still more emphasis, of the heavenly temple. "I have hallowed this House to put My name there for ever, and Mine eyes and Mine heart shall bethere perpetually." (1 Kingsix. 3.) And as the seed of Aaron "came near to God and stood before Him," when performing tabernacle or temple service, in the days of old, so *Christ*, our High Priest, has entered, not "into the holy places made by hands, but into heaven itself,"—that is, into the temple not made with hands,—“now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Where the High Priest is, there are the people also. They dwell in the presence of the Theocratic glory!—they behold the Lord of Hosts in royal state, sitting upon a throne "high and lifted up," whence proceed the mandates of His will and the emanations of His love! They behold the manifestations of the Deity in their noontide splendour—that glory which Christ describes Himself as having had with "the Father of glory before the world began,"—those "riches in glory," of which, according to the Apostle Paul, the saints are privileged to partake through Christ Jesus. When David wished to describe the blessedness of the righteous in a future state, he, laying great strain on the Vision of God, said, "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." (Psalm xvii. 15.) In a fine old German Hymn, quoted by Hengstenberg, we learn that "to behold the true God and the beautiful garniture of the heavenly temple, this is real blessedness;" while Bengel adds, "In the world it is held to be a great honour when a lord of the chamber, a high servant, may always be about the sovereign, and can get the nearest access to him at all times; but what is this compared with the privilege of those who are before the



throne of God, and wait upon Him day and night in His temple?"

In the sanctuaries of earth the purest delight of the saints, after their inner man, is realised in the spiritual vision of Jehovah, and in the contemplation of the beauties of holiness as they are dimly seen through the haze of this sin-blighted world. These beauties, though environed with terrors and "guarded by flames," are the chief objects of desire even in these lower sanctuaries. But if so, with what ineffable delight must the glorified spirit contemplate "the beauties of holiness," as they are reflected from the Divine countenance, and transmitted to the eye through the pure transparency of the upper sanctuary, which is the great *Sanctum Sanctorum* of the Universe! With what throbbing ecstasies do the angels and the elders, to the number of "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," stand in the presence of the excellent glory, crying out, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;" while "every creature in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, are to be heard saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto our God that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." The apostle adds, "And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four-and-twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him who liveth for ever and ever." (Rev. v. 11—14.)

## VII.

### THE PERFECTION OF THE SAINTS IN THE HEAVENLY STATE.

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THE Saint in Heaven shall be blessed with perfectibility in all the elements of his Being—mental, moral, and physical. He shall enjoy,

1. *Mental perfectibility.*

The mind of man in Heaven will be, we have reason to hope, vastly superior in its various organs and faculties to what it is in the present world. Some significant intimations of Holy Scripture are adapted to foster this hope; it is also supported by several striking analogies in the fields of Nature. Take the case of the butterfly, for instance. What marvellous transformations do we behold in the history of this insect! It is first enclosed in the shell of an egg, next it assumes the form of a ringed worm, in which state it casts its skin frequently; then it is observed to grow shorter and shorter, until it sinks into its torpid condition, at length to issue from its tomb as one of the most beautiful insects in Creation. Through all these changes, the rudiments of the butterfly are found to exist in all their integrity. Its mechanism is curious; examined by the microscope, its colouring matter is found to consist of inconceivably minute scales, which cover the membranes of its wings, like slates the wood-work of a house, in the proportion of 100,000 of them to the square inch, and the eye is found to consist of 17,000 lenses, each of which has the power of distinct vision. What a contrast do we behold between the butterfly gaily floating in the air and the same insect in the egg! Had that egg known its destiny, and possessed the power of speech, it would have said to the


naturalist, while musing on its probable destiny, "It doth not yet appear what I shall be." Had that ringed caterpillar possessed the power of speech, it would have said to the curious Inquirer while examining its structure, "It doth not yet appear what I shall be." Had that shortening worm possessed the powers of speech, it would have said to the watchful Observer, "It doth not yet appear what I shall be." Had that chrysalis, in the last stage of entombment, possessed the gift of thought and of speech, it might have said to those who regarded this as its end, "It doth not yet appear what I shall be." And truly the final transformation of the loathsome worm into the beautiful butterfly would have justified the expression in each particular case. Now, we believe that this is not an inappropriate illustration of the marvellous transformations through which the human mind passes in the fulfilment of its destiny. The ancient Greeks seem to have had such a notion; hence they designated the soul by the word "*Psyche*," which was their term for the butterfly. In the womb, the mind is in a similar condition to that of the insect in the egg; and of the first-born of mankind our mother Eve, antecedent to all experience of human development, might have said to Adam, as he mused on his probable destiny, "It doth not yet appear what he shall be." When the new-born infant hung on its mother's breast, with its senses fully awake, but untrained, and its mental faculties in a state of dormancy, she might have said again, with equal emphasis, "It doth not yet appear what he shall be." When, in the days of childhood, it romped about on the play-ground in front of the first habitation of mankind, with the senses well trained, but the perceptive faculties only just opening to the light of experience, she might have justly said, "It doth not yet appear what he shall be." In the days of youth, with its perceptive organs well developed, but the faculty of reason only partially, it might have been said, "It doth not yet appear what he shall be." What an interesting study is man, the masterpiece of all God's works on earth! In

every stage of the little embryo's development you observe some new faculty brought to light, or one long known to be possessed, manifesting itself in some higher form. The first mental efforts of infancy are directed to the culture of the senses. In childhood, the embryo man has just intelligence enough to conform to the simplest rules. In youth, he combines the learning of rules with the imitation of examples. In manhood, he investigates the principles on which the rules are based, and judges of the value of the examples. We have seen one stage of the little creature's development, in which his half-fledged mind was exercised solely in the training of the senses; another in which nearly all his time was spent in play, or in conforming his active habits to the rules imposed by maternal authority; a third, in which his tiny intelligence exercised itself on rules and examples conjointly; a fourth, in which faculties of a higher order were brought into play—and that period was spent in examining the rules previously adopted, and applying newly-discovered principles to the investigation of character. There is another stage, but we have no experience of that *yet*; nor have we any microscope adapted to the examination of mental phenomena, as the naturalist had for investigating the nature and habits of the butterfly, so that we are not able to detect the rudiments of the glorified man under cover of the grossness of his present earthly being. We must wait for the day to declare it.

Of the mental developments which will signalize that new stage of being on which man is about to enter, our information is very limited. One cheering fact, however, is patent to all observers, and it is, that from his birth to his burial, man's career is one of gradual development. He advances from stage to stage, carrying with him to each successive stage the acquisitions of the preceding period. But with all this experience of human development in the past, we are unable to solve the many questions which cross our track regarding the great mystery of his future existence. "It doth

not yet appear what we shall be." Whether we shall, after the resurrection, still be confined to the five senses suited to us as a medium of communication with external nature now, or be invested with a sixth or seventh sense adapted to a class of qualities in matter not known as yet, or to some other forms of being intermediate to matter and mind, and wholly unknown in the present world, is a great question. Whether, in our future being, these organs will rise in sensibility above those we now have, as the wonderful qualities of the glorified body shall excel those of this body of humiliation, is another question. Whether, in its inquiries after moral and intellectual truth in another world, the soul shall be confined to the old faculties of perception, consciousness, memory, abstraction, imagination, judgment, reasoning, and the moral sense, or shall be invested with some new powers, of which we know as little *now* as did the caterpillar, crawling from plant to plant, know of the wings and beauty of its insect state, is a third question. Whether our mental faculties in the progress of glorification will be improved in a degree commensurate with the development of our moral manhood, is a fourth. We strongly incline to the belief that the event will give an affirmative answer to all these questions; but, for the present, "it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

But whatever the light of Immortality may show on these points, we are fully assured that man's capacities for the acquirement of knowledge will be developed in a future state on a scale wholly unknown to his experience and observation in the present. The number of what we may call intuitive truths, which form the basis of all man's knowledge of earthly science, will be doubtless greatly multiplied in his glorified state. His faculties will exercise their functions with an accuracy wholly unknown in the present world; his understanding in the glorified state will evince a power of *comprehension*, and all his faculties an unflagging activity on every theatre of investigation, of which we can form no conception under the existing circumstances of his being. New Sciences



will, ever and anon, without painful effort, deposit with him their treasures, and the old ones, even those which, in his earthly history, he had regarded as most matured, will be looked upon as ranking not much higher than A, B, C of knowledge. And as the cycles of Immortality perform their courses, he will continue evermore to achieve new conquests in every field of inquiry.

Whatever clouds may overcast our speculations as to man's destiny in other respects, it is at least certain that he is the heir of Immortality. Even the body in the resurrection will be immortal; and it would be preposterous to predicate immortality of body and deny it of mind.

The soul, the offspring of the Deity in a peculiar sense, shall live for ever! True, it commenced its existence but as yesterday, yet it shall never cease to be! States the most flourishing—Empires the most gigantic—works of Art the most noble—Structures the most wondrous, shall moulder beneath the grasp of Time, but the Soul shall remain untouched and unhurt amid the general ruin!

Nay, more,—Islands may be swallowed up in the deep,—Continents may be cleft asunder,—the stars in Nature's highest canopy may become the fugitives of Creation, wandering without law in the voids of space, or pass into oblivion under a fiat of utter destruction, but the Soul shall survive every change, every disaster, and flourish in immortal youth!

Now, progression, both in the mortal and in the immortal state, is the great law of man's being, and that whether it be intellectually or morally considered. Newton's case is a fine illustration of intellectual progression. From what small beginnings he advanced to the sublimest heights of science! Isaac Newton, the child, used the "apple" as the plaything of the hour; Isaac Newton, the man, detected in it a law that extends to all matter in all parts of Creation. Isaac Newton, the youth, constructed windmills in his mother's garret! Isaac Newton, the eagle-eyed sage, built his eyrie among the stars. Now, just think of such a soul as Newton's

going onward in a course of endless development. What an intellectual Colossus in the course of a myriad of years must he become, even supposing the faculties with which he commenced his immortality and his stock of knowledge to have been what he had on earth, neither more nor less! Suppose, furthermore, that mighty intellect to be so constituted in another world as never to fall into a single misapprehension in the exercise of his powers of perception, nor a single error in his reasoning, however slight; never to let slip a fact, however trifling. What an immense fund of knowledge, and what vast intellectual powers must be acquired by him before the lapse of a million of years! But what do we say? "Years?" These counters of human life belong exclusively to EARTH, for there are no years—not even the great Platonic year—in Heaven and in Eternity.

Think of Newton, again, as being acquainted with the works of God through the medium, I will not say, of his old senses inspired with an inconceivably exquisite sensibility, but of those senses supplemented by two or three other perfectly new organs of sensation. Think of him, once more, as having his former intellectual faculties supplemented by other mental powers adapted to new conditions of existence favourable to carrying on incessant study without weariness. Why, such an intellect, exercised under such conditions, might seem adapted to grapple with all truth. Just think for a moment, what triumphs in the various fields of knowledge such an intellect must achieve in a thousand ages! in ten thousand! in a million! in a thousand millions ages! But here again we are falling into the old error. Why do we say "ages?" Ages serve well enough to measure those periods that mark the revolutions of history, but they are as useless as "years" to describe the progressions of heaven and eternity. We can think of no landmarks in Immortality, not even such immense cycles as mark the pre-Adamic history of our globe.

Nor let it be thought that because Newton's intellect was perhaps the most comprehensive *human* intellect that God

Almighty ever made, that therefore the progression indicated above is useless as an example of the perfectibility of the saints in another world. Beautiful was the remark of the pious Bishop Hall, who, on being informed, in his old age, that his astronomy was bad, replied, "Well, it may be so; but I am going to heaven, and as I shall take the stars in my way, I must leave the subject till then, when every mistake will be rectified." The practice of virtue, we have reason to think, will secure for us a recompense which shall vastly more than compensate for the unfavourable conditions under which we prosecuted the search after Truth in our earthly existence. "In the hour of death," as John Angell James observes, "the pious but illiterate tenant of the cottage, on whose mind the orb of science never rose, though the Sun of Righteousness poured upon it the light of a spiritual illumination, ascends above the disadvantages of education, makes a glorious transition from the shades of ignorance, in which he dwelt on earth, into the cloudless transparency of the firmament on high. His natural faculties, compressed and enfeebled now by the circumstances of his birth, shall then expand to a comprehension, and attain to a vigour, probably not surpassed by the loftiest of the human race; and he, too, shall know in heaven the works of the God of Nature as he knew below, and shall still better know *above* the works of the God of grace." (*Christian Charity*, pp. 244, 245.) It is of the whole fellowship of the saints that St. Paul is speaking when he says, "*For now we see through a glass darkly, but THEN face to face; now I know in part, but THEN shall I know as also I am known.*" (1 Cor. xiii. 12.)

It is probable, we think, that in heaven a much less proportion of our knowledge will rest on testimony than on earth. We shall, perhaps, be able to verify for ourselves all the data on which our intellectual powers shall proceed in their course of endless discovery. *Now* we philosophize in one country, while our data are supplied from another, and the theorist often depends for the soundness of his theory on facts, many



of which were observed in a distant age by an unknown Observer. This mutual dependence of individuals on one another in the pursuit of knowledge, extends, in some degree, even to religious inquiries. Who can be ignorant of the dependence of Christians for the soundness of their views of evangelical truth on the fidelity of the translators of the Scriptures? or of the dependence of translators for the accuracy of their versions on their grammars and lexicons, and the freedom of the manuscripts from interpolations? We might also instance the dependence of the bulk of the people upon their ministers, and those, again, on the critics whom they consult on the interpretation of the more difficult portions of the Holy Scriptures. There are no such difficulties in a future state. Testimony in heaven may be most implicitly relied upon, whenever it may be required as a means of information. But the probability is, that we shall, for the most part, be able to acquire a personal cognizance of the facts; observation and theory will exhibit an infallible correspondence with each other. "*We shall see face to face;*" "*We shall know as we are known.*"

It was with admirable propriety that Saurin, the Protestant minister at the Hague, when expatiating on this subject, uttered the following magnificent passage: "Has not this mental perfectibility of the blest already kindled within you an ardent desire to attain that felicity? Soul of man!—susceptible of so many ideas, of such enlarged knowledge, of illumination so unbounded;—is it possible for thee to sojourn without reluctance in a body which narrows thy sphere and cramps thy nobler faculties? Philosopher!—who art straining every nerve, who givest thyself no rest to attain a degree of knowledge incompatible with the condition of humanity!—Geometrician! who, after an incredible expense of thought, of meditation, of reflection, art able to attain, at most, the knowledge of the relations of a circle, or of a triangle!—Theologian! who, after so many days of labour and nights of watching, hast scarcely arrived at the capacity of explaining a few passages of

Holy Writ; of correcting, by an effort, some silly prejudice!—Wretched mortals! how much are you to be pitied! how impotent and ineffectual are all exertions to acquire real knowledge! I think I am beholding one of those animals the thickness of whose blood, the grossness of whose humours, the incumbrance of that house with which nature loads them, preventing them from moving with facility; I think I am beholding one of those animals striving to move over an immense space in a little, little hour. He strains, he bustles, he toils, he flatters himself with having made a mighty progress, he exults in the thought of attaining the end which he had proposed. The hour elapses, and the progress which he has made is a mere nothing, compared with the immensity of the space still untrodden.

“Thus loaded with a body replenished with gross humours, retarded by matter, we are able, in the course of the longest life, to acquire but a very slender and imperfect degree of knowledge. This body must drop—this spirit must disengage itself—before it can become capable of soaring unencumbered, of penetrating into futurity, and of attaining that height and depth of knowledge which the blessed in heaven possess.”

The heavenly state, we have reason to believe, will be distinguished by—

## 2. *Moral perfectibility.*

The radical condition of moral perfectibility is the exact conformity of our moral nature in all its parts to the requirements of God's most Holy Law. Now, since the law of God must be perfectly understood, in order to such precise conformity to its authoritative dictates, it is clear that a state of perfect knowledge is in the highest degree necessary to this perfectibility in its grandest sense. Heaven is the place of perfect knowledge, and therefore of perfect holiness. In that happy world there is not only the absence of whatever exerts a hostile influence on human virtue, but the presence of everything accessory to its development. The Lord of that region is “the HOLY ONE!” and everything connected with

Him, whether on earth or in heaven, bears the impress of His holiness. His NAME is "holy and reverend." His THRONE is "the throne of His Holiness." His TEMPLE is "His holy place." His SABBATH is called "His holy Sabbath." His PROMISE is designated "His holy promise!" His LAW is called "His holy law!" His COVENANT and the ORACLE, "His holy oracle!" His PRIESTS are said to be "holy unto Him!" His PROPHETS are "His holy Prophets!" His PEOPLE are, "an holy People unto the Lord their God!" His ANGELS are "His holy Angels." JESUS CHRIST is "His Holy Child!" and the HOLY GHOST "His Holy Spirit!"

Be it remembered, also, that the law of man's *moral* nature is progressive in quite as eminent a degree as that of his *mental* being. In allusion to this, the wise man illustrates "the path of the just" by the image of "a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day;" and the Apostle Paul describes the believer as being "changed from glory into glory!" Do you want an illustration? Take, then, the last of the apostles, who lived—if mortal ever did live—the life of heaven upon earth. Observe him in the decline of his mental powers, while his moral faculties retained all their vigour, stretching forth his feeble hands in the church at Ephesus, in the presence of the congregation, and saying, with faltering tongue and broken accents, "Little children, love one another." With the eye of faith he had gazed on "the glory of the Lord," through the haze of this earthly state, until his soul was dissolved in love. Think of the warmth of this venerable man's moral affections after he shall have gazed for a myriad of ages on the full splendours of the Divine countenance; on the difference between what he *will then be* and what he *was*, when borne into the church at Ephesus he commanded the admiration of the faithful by the purity and fervour of his sacred affections. The contrast is overpowering! But his moral progress goes on with the lapse of duration, and as you contemplate him after a longer period, the contrast becomes still more overpowering. A

duration rolls on its restless stream, the fervour of his affections ascends on the moral thermometer to a higher point than Gabriel's has already reached. Gabriel, by the law of moral progression, mounts still higher! John follows with mighty bound! Gabriel leads the way to higher and yet higher attainments of holiness, and John follows "hard after." Both the one and the other continue to move upward, in the direction of the Divine perfectibility, for ever and ever! Oh, what a destiny to anticipate! But such a destiny have all the Saints!

O, reader! permit us to exhort you to contemplate the beauties of HOLINESS till you fall in love with its charms. No beauties are to be compared with these. There is beauty in a star-light night, when the twinkling orbs of Heaven, moving harmoniously onward in their courses, remind us of "the music of the spheres;" there is beauty in the landscape in the vernal season of the year, when the withered and blighted aspect of Autumn, and the chilling cold of Winter, having passed away, we are reminded anew of the care of the Deity over all the works His hands have made; there is beauty in the clouds when, after a thunderstorm, the refracted light of the rainbow reminds us of the covenant which Divine Mercy made with Noah; but the most exquisite of all the beauties which adorn the Universe are "the beauties of Holiness." Contemplate those beauties, till you are charmed by their loveliness, and feel the power of their attraction. In the annals of Science we read of a young man who went to a celebrated mathematician of the last century, with a problem he had solved, and professed an ardent desire to prosecute his studies out of a love of mathematical fame. "Young man," said the mathematician, himself enthusiastically devoted to the pursuit of knowledge, "you will never acquire celebrity as a student of Science unless you pursue Truth for her own sake." The remark applies equally well to the pursuit of Virtue. None will succeed but those who feel the power of her charms, and pursue her for her own sake. That there

will be other subordinate motives we do not deny, but the master-motive, which swallows up all the rest, will be the attraction of her loveliness. She will be admired and loved; admired and loved only as the moral Image of the Deity. This we believe to be precisely accordant with the Divine ethics of Him who exhorted the Hebrews to "follow Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Chap. xii. ver. 14.)

Finally, it must be borne in mind, that just as the love of holiness is indispensable to high attainments in the practice of holiness, so a holy state of man's moral being is necessary to our participation, after death, in all the raptures of the beatific vision. Chalmers is very fine on this point—the *personal capacity* for heavenly blessedness. "It would be no heaven, and no enjoyment at all, without a *personal* adaptation, on the part of its occupiers, to the kind of happiness which is current there. If that happiness consisted entirely in sights of magnificence, of what use would it be to confer a title-deed of entry on a man who was blind? Holiness is the eye for moral beauty. If that happiness consisted in sounds of melody, of what use would the passport be to the man who was deaf? Holiness is the ear for moral harmony. To make out a heaven for such, a change must be made on the persons they wear, as well as in the place which they occupy, and their ears must be unstopped; or if that happiness consisted in fresh and perpetual accessions of new and delightful truth to the understanding, what would rights and legal privileges avail to him who was sunk in helpless idiotism? To provide him with a heaven, it is not enough that he be transported to a place among the mansions of the celestial—he must be provided with a new faculty; and, as before, a change behoveth to be made upon the senses; so now, ere heaven can be heaven to its occupier, a change must be made upon his mind." In like manner, if that happiness shall consist in the vision of infinite holiness, wisdom, and truth, we must be prepared for it, by the practice of holy

habits and the exercise of holy affections in the present state, and without this preparation, without an individual should be delivered from his earth-born propensities, without a clean heart should be created, and a right spirit be renewed, without he be transformed into a holy and God-like character, it is quite in vain to have put a deed of entry into his hands; heaven would have no charm for him; all its notes would fall with tasteless insipidity upon his ear, and justification itself would cease to be privilege, and the want of moral fitness would illustrate the necessity for the exhortation of the apostle, "Follow holiness, without which no man can see the Lord."

Holiness is the brightest trait in the glorification of the blessed; it is the richest ingredient in the blessedness of the righteous. Without it all other qualities would be but as the painting of a corpse, or the whitening of a sepulchre: hence we find that the noblest characters in the Bible have been remarkable for the love of what is holy. David says, "Thy word is very *pure*, therefore Thy servant loveth it." (Ps. xix. 140.) Our Lord says, in that inimitable moral Code which He delivered to the five thousand, "Blessed are the *pure* in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. v. 8.) And again, the Psalmist says, "I will behold Thy face in *righteousness*: I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness. (Ps. xvii. 15.)

Finally, the heavenly state, after the resurrection of the dead, will be distinguished by

### 3. *Physical perfectibility.*

It was matter of high exultation to the early Christians that the body which, at death, is committed to the custodianship of the grave, shall be raised again. There were, indeed, in those times, as there are still, individuals who doubted the possibility of the resurrection, and were disposed to cry out, "How can these things be?" But when the sceptic incredulously inquires, How? with the object of indicating that there are really no means by which the resurrection can be

effected, he pays a most degrading tribute to the power of death—a power which has dissolved into dust the mortal remains of humanity for ages, and whose spell cannot be broken. Now, we grant that it would be the height of folly to deny the reality of a Power which has, in all ages, kept mankind in the bondage of fear. His charnel-houses all over the world, his ravages among old and young, rich and poor, in all ages and in all climes, sufficiently attest the reality of his power, the extent of his dominion, and the protracted duration of his iron sway. Faithful to the fears of mankind, the painter, transferring the ideal of his imagination to the Canvas, has portrayed him as a crowned monster of a skeleton shape, with portentous scythe, which has mown down the frail grass of humanity in all its successive seasons of reproduction. And poets, after the manner of Milton, though they have denuded him of almost every trace of *substance*, and even *form*, yet have they studiously preserved his *identity* as the King of terrors:—

“The other shape,  
If shape it might be call'd, that shape had none  
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,  
Or substance might be call'd, that shadow seem'd.  
. . . Black it stood as Night,  
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,  
And shook a dreadful dart.”

Such are the pictures which the fear of death has conjured up in the mind; such is that terrible phantom power which has kept myriads all their lifetime in bondage. But it is our joy to know, that in the person of the glorified Mediator of the New Covenant is a mightier power; that to Him belongs a wider dominion and a more enduring empire. Eighteen centuries ago He invaded the territories of the foe and brought forth the captives which were the trophies of His conquest, and in due time He shall rescue all the dead, depopulate the empire of Death, overthrow his throne, and annihilate utterly his skeleton form! As God commanded the enfranchisement of Israel in the land of Egypt, and under

Moses delivered them from the grinding tyranny of Pharaoh, so shall the glorified Redeemer ultimately cause the great Archangel's trumpet-blast of Liberty to be heard far and wide throughout the sleeping-places of the dead, and, obedient to the mighty summons, the myriads of the departed shall come up out of their dark abodes to stand before the great white throne.

What may be done, even by a finite intellect, in the restoration of the forms of the dead, has, in our own age, been strikingly illustrated on another theatre by Cuvier, the great comparative anatomist. The cabinets of Paris had been filled with an endless variety of bones belonging to unknown animals, and the problem submitted to this great man for solution was the giving to each animal its appropriate bones, and the reconstruction of the skeleton of each from the fragments of all. This was an arduous task; but, by the aid of a genius almost unparalleled, Cuvier performed it not only to his own satisfaction, but to the admiration of the whole world of Science. From the bones of that large compartment of the great geological charnel-house, the gypsum quarries of Paris, Philosophy reconstructed the skeletons of numerous creatures which are believed to have existed on the earth during various epochs, long antecedent to man's appearance on the stage. To each animal he gave its own body: beyond this genius could not go. He could restore the skeletons—he could not infuse into them the breath of life. A greater problem will be solved by our great Redeemer. What this wonderful individual effected with respect to the bones of these animals, the Saviour shall achieve with respect to the atomic elements of all the dead. Their dust, dissolved by fire and scattered by water and by breeze, shall at length be collected, and, instinct with life, at the bidding of Him “that sitteth upon the Throne,” each essential atom shall combine with its kindred atom, and the grand result shall be not only physical *individuality*, but *identity*, to each member of the Adamic race. He shall give to each soul “his own body.” Nay, more—He



shall invest the dust of His people with a class of properties of which there shall have been no previous example except in the glorified body of the great Redeemer. The doctrine is thus announced by the apostle in his most magnificent dissertation of the resurrection of the saints, in the first epistle to the Corinthians: "*It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. . . . As is the earthy, such are they that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. . . . Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.*"

What a contrast between the body which the sanctified spirit occupies in the present state, and that which will be prepared for it on the Resurrection morn!

1. It is the contrast between an animal body and a non-animal body.

The word "*animal*" is regarded by critics generally as best expressing the sense of the original word, which has been rendered "*natural*" in the Authorised Version. Such is the term which the apostle uses to designate the material organization in which the soul of man now dwells. It is a body adapted to the present world. It is sustained by meats and drinks. It is the seat of appetites and inclinations, which man now has in common with the brutes that perish. As to his body, man is but a more elaborately organized animal. He holds intercourse with external nature through senses of flesh and

blood. This organization is subject to the laws which regulate the growth, the multiplication, and the decay of animated beings in general.

It is sown an animal body, but is raised a *non-animal* body ; that is, as Dr. Pye Smith and others think, a body greatly refined, highly etherealized, and free from those laws which now regulate man's animal economy. In the present state of existence, we can form but very inadequate conceptions of what our translators call "a spiritual body." The ancient Hebrews, when they tried to describe the nature of this body, spoke of it as "the angelical clothing of the soul." Tertullian, one of the early Fathers, following in their track, calls it "angelized flesh." Barnes says, "The apostle here, by affirming that the body will be spiritual, intends to deny that it will need that which is now necessary to the support of the animal functions ; it will not be sustained in that way ; it will lay aside those peculiar animal organizations, and will cease to convey the idea which we now attach to the word *animal*, or to possess that which we now include under the name of vital functions. The word *spiritual* here stands opposed to the word *natural* or *animal*." "It will be a body, but it will have so far the nature of spirit as to be without those functions which now control the body. It will be so much like spirit as to be continued without food or nutriment : to be destitute of the peculiar physical organization of flesh, and blood, and bones as here ; and it will live as we conceive spirits to live ; sustained and exercising its powers without waste, weariness, decay, or the necessity of having its powers recruited by food and sleep." The idea of the apostle, then, seems to be that of an organism highly refined and elaborated, wholly purged from the grossness of our present organism—in which the appetites nestle as in inferior animals—combined with the perfecting of its perceptive organs in such a degree as to make it to an extent now unknown the handmaid of the spirit. We can set no limits to the refinement of which matter is susceptible. We have often witnessed this susceptibility in the changes

superinduced on the hardest and most solid substances. The coal in the mine, for instance, contains in a fixed and solid state large quantities of the same substance as the sunbeam is made of. Put that coal through the process of combustion, and this luminous substance will be set free in such quantities as to diffuse itself over every inch of space in the largest hall; and yet, with your present dull organs of sense, you are not able to distinguish a single particle of the whole mass. But we can conceive of beings so organised that they could distinguish the ultimate particles of matter however sublimated. Our visual organs are so constructed that very minute objects when ever so near, and those afar off, however large, elude our observation—both the one and the other fruitful sources of ignorance—but we can conceive of eyes adapted to detect the existence of the minutest objects, however near, equally with the largest, however distant—eyes that should not only observe the surface of matter, but penetrate into its interstices, and whose piercing gaze should reach to the remotest objects. Just as the powers of Nature are often most strikingly manifested in connection with the most refined material existences, so we have no doubt that the highly-refined matter in which our spirits shall be embodied at the Resurrection will be invested with organs of sense, rising in *sensibility* and *range* inconceivably above anything experienced by us in this earthly existence.

In the present state, our souls from their dependence on an imperfect animal organization for the manifestation of their sympathies, are precluded from cultivating affection in its more ardent forms to more than a very few individuals whom we call friends. How delightful to think of that more perfect and ethereal organization which shall be suited to the cultivation of friendship the most ardent, with the whole community of virtuous beings! It is interesting to reflect on the mighty change in this and other respects which we are destined to realize in the resurrection. We often derive great comfort from figuring to ourselves some of those changes. In the

present time, the soul dwells in an organised body with senses so dull as to furnish only very imperfect means of converse with the vast system of Being, much in the same way as the prisoner who dwells in a dungeon with only four or five of the smallest possible apertures, through which he holds intercourse with the external world. Suppose that prisoner to be released, that dungeon to be taken down, and a structure to be reared out of its ruins analogous to the far-famed Crystal Palace, giving free access to the light of heaven through the vaulted roof *above* and the crystal walls *around*. What a change would this be to *that prisoner*! How unlike the dark dungeon he formerly occupied! A vastly greater change, dear reader, awaits the saint on the great Resurrection morn. His soul, now the prisoner of the body, with its five senses of flesh and blood—much in the same way as the insect is entombed in its chrysalis—shall then, like that insect risen from its tomb, have free access to the light of heaven! With a *spiritual* body, every particle of which is in exact sympathy with universal intelligence, and an inlet to the purest enjoyment, *the soul* shall then feel thousands of sensations of which it never had any experience; myriads of pleasures, of which it never had any conception in its former state of being!

In this view it was that an Anchorite, as he gradually sank down into the arms of death to make a feast for worms, broke out into singing, under a feeling of high exultation. When asked "Wherefore he sung," he said, "Ah! I sing because I see that wall tumbling down, which hinders me from beholding the face of God." Yes, dear reader, this body is the wall which conceals from us the splendours of the beatific vision. "Fall down! fall down! interposing, invidious wall; fall down! impenetrable wall, and then we shall see God. But to man in his present state, to man loaded with a body like this, the illumination of the blessed in Heaven is among the things which are *unspeakable*!"

2. There is the contrast between the *impotence* of the

present body and the *power* of the resurrection body. "It is sown in *weakness*, it is raised in *power*."

*It is sown in weakness.* The weakness of the present body is frequently alluded to in the Word of God. The Psalmist cries out, "O spare me that I may recover *strength* before I go hence, and be no more." Again: "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth, for the wind passeth over it and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more." Job speaks to the same effect: "Mortal men dwell in houses of clay; their foundation is in the dust; they are crushed before the moth." And the wise King of Israel confirms the whole: "If God gather unto himself His spirit and His breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust; for there is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit, neither hath he power in the day of death." Now, who does not know that these representations of the inspired writers are confirmed by a variety of facts with which the [every-day] experience of each man makes him acquainted? What is sleep but a memento of the weakness of the flesh? What are pain, sickness, and death, but so many evidences that we dwell in houses of clay?

Let us reflect, gentle reader, on the frailty of the human body in infancy, in youth, in manhood, and in old age. How liable the spark of life is to be extinguished by some violent passion, or even by the slightest accident! Behold Absalom killed by his ambition. See, the swallowing of a grape-stone brings to an end the odes of Anacreon; intense grief acts as a lullaby on the muse of Homer; boisterous joy overpowers the frame of Sophocles! It was Jonathan's glory that dug a grave for him on the mountains of Gilboa. A breath of pestilence summons away the spirit of Adam Clarke; a few calculi in the kidneys exhaust the vital powers of Robert Hall; consumption cuts short the splendid career of Henry Kirke White; the dangers of child-bearing blot out the fair prospects of the Princess Charlotte; the rupture of a vessel on the brain

terminates the life of the eminent and greatly-venerated Robert Eckett. Then, again, let us reflect on the extreme limitation of its *muscular power*, which places a kind of embargo on many of its efforts to fulfil the dictates of the will, or the desires of the heart. It cannot run like the horse, sustain itself in continued flight like the eagle, bear fatigue like the camel, or carry heavy burdens like the elephant. Even as the sensorium of the mind, for which the nervous system is more especially adapted, its powers are soon exhausted. It is not able to realize those grand and lofty enterprises to which the mind would dedicate its energies, and how weak it often proves to realize the holier aspirations of the soul! The spirit would search the deep things of God, but it is weighed down by the inertness of the body; it would willingly keep constant watch in the service of God and virtue; but, alas! the flesh is weak. Benson says, "The mind can do many things, but the *weakness* of the body hindereth. It circumscribes my longings after wisdom—checks me in my pursuits after truth. I would go and find wisdom in the uttermost parts of the earth; my body is *weak* in *motion*. I would search for hidden treasures day and night; my body is *weak* in watching. I would penetrate the deepest mysteries by the energy of unbroken meditation; my body is *feeble*, and its feebleness must be renovated."

But we are told by the apostle, that "it is raised in *power*!" One of the results of the "weakness" of our present condition, and, at the same time, one of the greatest drawbacks on enlarged enjoyment and varied knowledge, is the extreme localisation of our persons, which keeps each individual of the twelve hundred millions of mankind apart from all the rest. With what raptures ought we to hail the day of our enfranchisement, when we shall be as free to form companionships in all parts of the virtuous universe as the songsters of the forest in those extensive regions over which their rapid wings conduct them! Confined as we are in our present existence, to narrow tracts of territory, which are

bounded on every hand by impassable obstacles, much in the same way as we have seen little fishes confined in the drawing-room to their narrow sea within its barriers of glass, or condemned to live and die on the same spot where we were born, as the tree on the ground where it was planted—with what delight ought we to hail the day when these animal bodies shall be so elaborated by the skill, and so energized by the power of the Redeemer, that they will be capable of darting with more than the velocity of the sun-ray from world to world, and, instead of seeking variety on the lakes and the oceans, the mountains and the valleys, among the plants and the animated beings of this little sphere, shall go to observe the sublime and beautiful in Saturn's ring and in Jupiter's belt, or gaze on those endless forms of beauty and grandeur which greet the eye of the observer in the other provinces of the Great King! It is our joy to know that these anticipations are not visionary. In the future world, the righteous will have their powers of being so invigorated that they will be able to worship God without cessation! The resurrection body will be adapted to the most prolonged meditation, and the mightiest efforts of the intellect; the spiritual body will be attuned, most exactly, to the holy sympathies which glow with undying vigour in the beatified spirit of the redeemed. "The righteous will serve God day and night in His temple." The activity of the body will be adapted most precisely to the activity of the mind, and the redeemed will enjoy, there can be no doubt, the same facilities for rapid locomotion as are enjoyed by the angels of God, unless we are to suppose that the glorified Son of the Adorable Father is, in this respect, inferior to the exalted beings over whom He sways the sceptre of dominion. His body is the archetype of ours. What those facilities will be, may be inferred from the Scripture account of a journey which one of them performed in an almost incredibly short space of time. You have often wondered at the rapidity with which the electric spark conveys intelligence from one country to another; at the facility with which the

sun-ray travels over the radius of the earth's orbit; but the most extraordinary instance of rapid locomotion is that of the angel Gabriel, mentioned by Daniel. The circumstances were these. The prophet had been favoured with a vision relating to the destinies of his people—a vision he did not perfectly understand. But he so far understood it as to be deeply afflicted on account thereof. He grew faint; in the course of his devotions, his spirit failed within him. At this conjuncture an angel was sent to explain the vision, and to strengthen him. He was despatched from the Heaven of heavens—the central world in the Divine dominions. He had to cross the universe; to pass numberless systems of worlds in the celestial spaces, and distinguish our sun and his system from all the stars that shine in the firmament. He had to distinguish our globe from all the planets and satellites in the solar system; he had to distinguish Babylonia from all the countries on the surface of our planet; Babylon from all the places in Babylonia; the King's palace from all the mansions in that ancient city; Daniel from all the courtiers of the King of Babylon, and the apartments of that prophet from all the other apartments in the palace. What a number of almost impossible conditions to be realised in any period, however long! But the angel performed them all, and he performed them with such celerity that he was with the prophet by the time of evening oblation, and strengthened him while he was yet upon his knees. In like manner shall our glorified bodies be endued with energies by which we shall be enabled, in all probability, to dart from place to place with a velocity immensely greater than that of the sun-ray, and study the character of the great Creator in every planet that rolls, and in every star that shines!

Luther, strengthened by facts like this, was of opinion that a glorified body would move up and down like a thought, and Austin, in like manner, represented the body in the resurrection as being constituted most perfectly the vehicle of the soul. "The body," said he, "will presently be here and there, where the soul would have it."



3. There is the contrast between the *humiliation* of the present body and the *glory* of the resurrection body. "It is sown in *dishonour*, it is raised in *glory*." "It is sown in dishonour!" The body of man, defaced by the Apostasy, is but the wreck of what that body was when God created it. A piece of ancient sculpture, after the wear and tear of thirty centuries, more closely approximates what that sculpture was when it received the last touch of some Egyptian artist, than the body of man, in its present state, what the body was when it came forth originally from the hands of its Maker. Or, to vary the illustration: the oak, in the midst of a December blast, with its leafless branches spread out, like the extended limbs of a naked skeleton, more closely resembles what that oak was in the balmy month of May, when clothed with its beautiful foliage, than the body of fallen man that of man primeval. Accordingly, the apostle calls it a "vile body;" or, as it has been rendered, "this body of our humiliation."

*It shall be raised in glory.* To judge of the contrast in this respect between the present and the future state of the saint, we must direct our attention to the contrast which obtains between Christ's body of humiliation and His body of glorification—the most wonderful contrast in the whole empire of being. Let us trace it as it is exposed to view on the page of Revelation. Read, then, side by side, the record of the evangelists, and the graphic outlines in the Apocalyptic visions. How boldly is the contrast thus sketched by the hand of inspiration! *Here* you see Him crowned with thorns, languishing on the cross, deserted by timid friends and tortured by infuriated foes, while lessons of love float in His languid eyes; *there* you see Him crowned with honour and immortality, and from His eyes flash an insufferable brightness. *Here* you behold His feet nailed to the accursed tree; *there* you see them "like unto fine brass, as if it burned in a furnace." *Here* you observe His voice stifled in the death-cry, "It is finished!" *there* you listen to its majestic tones as

“the sounding of many waters.” *Here* you see His enemies putting into His hand the reed, the emblem of mock-royalty; *there* you behold in His right hand “the seven stars,” while out of that mouth, that tasted the vinegar and the gall, flashes “a sharp two-edged sword.” And that countenance, which was marred more than any man’s, is radiant as “the sun shining in the greatness of his strength.” *Never* did conqueror, in his triumphal chariot, present such a spectacle to the contemplative eye of Reason; *never* did monarch on his royal seat, surrounded with all the trophies of conquest and all the trappings of majesty, present such claims to the homage and devotion of all hearts. His appearance and mien are those of the Divinity; His presence sheds an unearthly effulgence over all the mysterious scenes of the Apocalypse; His eye glances as if it were the appointed faculty of Omniscience; His voice summons up “the echoes of eternity.” To the ear there are the accents of a man, but to the heart, overawed by superhuman majesty, there remains nothing but the distinct recognition of “the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, who is, and who was, and who is to come—the Almighty.” *Hark!* he speaks; and oh! what words of comfort come from his lips: “Fear not, I am the First and the Last: I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen. And have the keys of Hades and of Death.” You see, He Himself points to the contrast: “I am He that *liveth* and was *dead*.” Behold it, then—the contrast between what the great Redeemer *is* and what He *was*; for that is the type of the changes which glorification shall bring to the mortal bodies of all the saints. In the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, His was an *animal* body; on the throne of Heaven, it is a *spiritual* body. *Here* it was a body of *weakness*; *there* it is a body of *strength*. *Here* it was a body of *humiliation*; *there* it is a body of *glory*. *Here* it moved about in a sin-blighted world; *there* it is the grand centre round which move the myriads of “angels” and “the general assembly of the Church of the firstborn.” What a

scene of constellated glories ! what an embodiment of unheard-of physical attributes in one being ! Well, this Being, with all His wonderful traits of glorification, is a proto-typal character. He is the second Adam, the Lord from heaven ; and “as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

The *image* of the heavenly ! Oh, what a destiny to anticipate ! As in our bodies of dishonour we bear the dull image of the *first* Adam, so in our resurrection-bodies of glory we shall bear the bright, glorious image of the second Adam. We shall be fashioned into His likeness—not merely, there is reason to believe, in respect of the specific properties of which we have been speaking, but in personal conformation, and in the expression of our glorified countenances. What is the chief point of interest in a human body ? Is it not the countenance ? And what is the chief point of interest in the countenance ? Is it not the expression ? And what is the grand secret of expression ? It is those scintillations of the Mind and Heart which are located there, as in their proper home. It is the inner man gleaming through the outward. If so, then in a perfect physical organization the countenance would be the reflex of the intellect and of the affections seated within. Now, the great Redeemer has such an organization. His matchless countenance is the *ground* on which His transcendent virtues have been photographed by the light of Heaven. Or shall we not rather say, that that adorable countenance is the *transparency* through which are manifested, by their *own light*, the moral and intellectual splendours of His Deity, combined with all the distinctive virtues, graces, and intelligence of His spotless humanity ? What a sight to behold ! what an image to bear ! The saints of the Most High, dear reader, shall not only behold this great sight, but they shall be so fashioned as to reflect in their persons, in some degree, this glorious image. “I shall be satisfied,” says the Psalmist, “when I awake in Thy likeness ; when I behold Thy face in righteousness.” And

the Apostle John says, "We shall be like *Him*; for we shall see Him as He is." We shall see Him as He is! O glorious privilege, to behold the King Eternal!

It is recorded of Mr. Beckford, that when he was at Madrid, in 1780, Charles III., as a parting civility, desired to know what favour the fascinating and accomplished Englishman would accept at his hands. The author of "*Vathek*" asked leave to see the face of Charles V., that he might judge of the fidelity of the portraits by Titian. The marble sarcophagus being removed from its niche and the lid raised, the lights of the Pantheon once more gleamed on the features of the pale emperor. Christian, you have a nobler aspiration. You desire to see Jesus! Not as He lay in the tomb of Joseph, but as He sits upon the throne of the universe. Wait a little while, and the palace-gates will be thrown wide open *for you*, and the minister in waiting will conduct you into His presence. *You shall see Him!* You shall see Him as *He is!* You shall be *like Him!*

4. There is the contrast between the *corruptible, mortal* body of the present state, and the incorruptible, immortal body of the resurrection. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption." "This mortal shall put on immortality." *It is sown in corruption!* This revolting fact with respect to man's mortal remains, is so familiar to each of us, that we cannot but feel astonished at the strange hallucination that inspired the poet's pen when he apostrophised Death as the image of all that is lovely and beautiful:—

"Ah! lovely appearance of Death!  
What sight upon earth is so fair?  
Not all the gay pageants that breathe,  
Can with a dead body compare."

Human *experience* in all ages has uttered itself in a very different style. The old patriarch, when he beheld the traces of corruptibility on the fair form of his lovely Sarah, was revolted at the sight, and desired to have his "dead buried

out of his sight." And it is recorded of Don Francis Borgia, a relative of Charles V., of Spain, that he was finally weaned from the light and frivolous pursuits of a courtier by the sight of the remains of the deceased Empress Isabella at the moment of her interment. "Towards her," says Rogers, in one of the most brilliant essays ever penned, "he had felt an almost filial regard. She had long been the zealous patron and the cordial friend of himself and of Eleanora, and at the public festivals which celebrated the victories of Charles and the meetings of the States of Castille at Toledo, they shone among the most brilliant of the satellites by which his throne was encircled. At the moment of the triumph the inexorable arm was unbarred which so often, as in mockery of human pomp, confounds together the world's gayest pageants and the humiliations of the grave. 'Dust to dust, and ashes to ashes!' but when the imperial fall, it is not without one last poor assertion of their departed dignity. Isabella might not be laid in the sepulchre of the kings of Spain until, amidst the funeral rites, the soldered coffin had been opened, the cerements removed, and some grandee of the highest rank had been enabled to depose that he had seen within them the very body of the deceased sovereign. Such, in pursuance of an ancient custom, was the duty confided to the zeal of Don Francis Borgia; nor was any one better fitted for such a trust. The eye, for ever closed, had never turned to him but with maternal kindness, and every lineament of that serene and once eloquent countenance was indelibly engraven on his memory. Amidst the half-uttered prayers in which a corrupt Church commended her soul to the Divine mercy, and the low dirge of the organ, he advanced with streaming eyes, and reverently raised the covering which concealed the secrets of the grave, *when*—but why or how pourtray the appalling and loathsome spectacle?—that gentle brow, that eloquent countenance, that form so lately raised to earth's proudest throne, and extolled with an almost adoring homage, was seen transformed into the very image of corruption.

. . . . Don Francis turned from the sight to shudder and to pray."

It goes down to the tomb's *mortal body*; the image of the earthly is *an image of mortality*. The bringing out in bold relief of the mortal lineaments of the earthly at the close of life is the grand event towards which every other tends in man's earthly history. The same laws that contribute to the growth of man's body, from childhood to youth, secure its progressive decay from the maturity of manhood to the frailty of age. Our life, in this view, is but a lingering death. The child's first step in life is on a road that conducts to the tomb.

Yes, the image of the earthly is, alas! an image of death. What a sight for mortal to behold! There is something in it which defies the painter's art. The skeleton form!—the eyeless sockets!—the physiognomy of death may be approached by the pencil, but there are certain sentiments which we feel in the contemplation of this subject that have no counterpart except in the *actual* image. The statue also fails of an embodiment of this image. True it is still, cold, motionless, insensible!—but the pulse of life never throbbed in that capacious breast!—sensation never thrilled in those finely-moulded limbs!—intellect never was enthroned in that colossal head!—but behold that body upon which has fallen the mortal image of the earthly. It is the body of the illustrious Humboldt! There is *coldness*, as in the statue!—*rigidity*, as in the statue!—*insensibility*, as in the statue! Here the parallel fails. Mind never was enthroned—moral sentiments never were enshrined in that statue, but in that dead body once throbbed a heart which felt aspirations after universal knowledge; in it once dwelt a mind that intermeddled with all knowledge; and those feet, which you see bound in the icy fetters of death, carried it forth into distant lands, that it might cull lessons of wisdom from all climes; and those eyes, aided by the instruments of Science, strained themselves to catch a glimpse of the very outposts of the

empire of the Eternal King. We cannot think of these affecting changes without a sense of deep solemnity and awe in the sight of those dark lineaments of death which form the most prominent feature in the image of the Earthly. But in the moment of our deepest gloom a bright ray of Hope shoots athwart our mind!—we behold the image of the Heavenly, bright as the sun, and instinct with all the powers of an immortal life. The apostle tells us that “this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.”

*This corruptible shall put on incorruption!* It shall be purged of all the seeds of decay. It shall be freed for ever from sickness, pain, and decline.

*This mortal shall put on immortality!* The saint shall be delivered from the sceptre and empire of Death for ever. On his resurrection body shall be impressed all the immortal lineaments of the Heavenly. That pallid countenance shall glow with immortal vigour! Those sightless eyes shall be lit up with radiance of immortality!—that horrid countenance shall shine gloriously in the beams of all the virtues and graces of Christian manhood!—that motionless tongue shall give expression to immortal raptures!—that insensate ear shall catch the music of the skies! and every member of the renovated body shall bear the impress of immortality!

One of the grand scenes immortalized on the splendid page of Tasso, stands connected with the name of John, Duke of Bouillon, and his companions. When, in their march in the Holy Land, the lofty towers of its celebrated metropolis broke into view, they raised a mighty shout—“JERUSALEM! JERUSALEM!” Reader, the children of Sion will, after the event on which we have been dilating with such a glow of interest, be gathered in the New Jerusalem. And when they meet one another in the streets of that glorious City, or meet in solemn conclave on some high festive occasion, fresh from the scenes of Resurrection Morn, what think you may be supposed to be the watchword on every lip? Will it not

be, "Immortality! a glorious immortality!" An immortality in the image of the Heavenly! Oh, it were worth all the pain and humiliation of a thousand deaths to enjoy that glorification!

What a glorious announcement is this? *Immortality!* The word is easily uttered, but it would require the intelligence of the Deity fully to unfold its import. *Immortality!* It suggests a period, in comparison of which the immense epochs of the pre-Adamic world dwindle into nothing, and the Adamic history with the aggregate lives of an hundred and fifty generations of human beings is less than nothing. *Immortality!* This word indicates a period in which centuries count for instants, and millions of millions of them bear vastly less proportion to the whole duration of the *everlasting* lifetime of the redeemed than a *minute* does to a million of ages. *Immortality!* Thanks be unto God for this word in the charter of our destiny. If it were obliterated from the record, or even a doubt as to the *perpetuity* of their bliss could find access to the bosoms of the redeemed, heaven would that instant lose half its charms to "a great multitude which no man could number." The loss of Immortality, however remote the event, would be to them what the *near* expectation of the annihilation of the atmosphere, or the blotting of the sun from the firmament, would be to the teeming populations which throng our earthly sphere. It would be followed by a sense of desolation unspeakably more intense than ever yet oppressed a human being.

Such are the best views we have been able to gain of the *physical* perfectibility of the saints. Combine these views with what we have said on their *intellectual* and *moral* perfectibility, and you will have some faint conception of that perfectibility in all the elements of their manhood which awaits them in a future state. And remember, O reader! that at the last great day we must meet the Judge, either in his own image, "the Heavenly," or in the unrenewed image of the Earthly. The *physical* image of the Heavenly



will be impressed at that day only on those who shall have acquired His *moral* image during their probation in this life. Solemn thought! Coleridge once said, "If a man is not rising upward to be an *angel*, depend upon it he is sinking downward to be a *devil*." There is a law of moral progression, by which we are constantly *ascending* or *descending* in our moral nature. It is constantly improving or deteriorating. Whether we will it or *not*, we at all times are working for immortality. God grant that ours may be an immortality of blessedness!

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## VIII.

### HEAVEN AS A STATE.

#### A STATE OF REST.

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HEAVEN is not only a state of personal perfectibility, but also a state of Rest. We are told by the apostle, that "there remaineth a *rest* to the people of God." (Heb. iv. 9.) Now we know that there are passages of Scripture in which the settlement of the Israelites in the land of Canaan is spoken of as a "rest," but that cannot be the sense of the word in this instance; for the Jews were settled in Canaan at the time when these words were written. We are aware, also, that the observance of the Sabbath-day according to the LAW was a "rest" to man and beast; but that cannot be the sense of the word in this connection, for the Jews had enjoyed their Sabbaths for more than a thousand years when Paul wrote these words. We know that in Scripture the Sabbatic year is spoken of as a "rest" to the land; but that cannot be the rest here indicated; for the Hebrews had suffered the land to have this periodic rest from the time of their settlement in Canaan downward to that of the apostle. The "rest" of the Israelites in the land of Canaan was only a type of the saint's "rest" in heaven, just as Canaan itself was a type of "the better country" in the skies. As the temporal inheritance was used to prefigure the eternal, so the "rest" of the seed of Abraham in that inheritance is used as a type of the "rest" of the people of God in the heavenly state. We may observe—

1. It is a *REST* from *toil*. "For he that hath entered into rest, hath also ceased from his own works, as God did from His." (Heb. iv. 10.) The curse pronounced on Adam after

the apostacy, was that, in the sweat of his face he should eat bread till he returned unto the ground. (Gen. iii. 19.) The curse pronounced on the progenitor has been inflicted on all his seed, and toil, in one or another of its forms, is the common lot of humanity. The Christian is no exception to the general law. His life is one of constant vigilance, and of vigorous effort. If he walk, he must *walk* "circumspectly;" if he *stand*, he must "take heed lest he fall;" if he *run*, he must "so run, not as uncertainly," but must "lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset him, and run with patience the race that is set before him." His life is one of strenuous effort. He labours to enter into rest. Whatsoever his hand findeth to do, he does it with his might. He works out his salvation with fear and trembling. "In the morning he soweth his seed, and in the evening he withholdeth not his hand." He oftentimes "goeth forth bearing precious seed weeping." He is always going after His "Father's business," saying, "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day; for the night cometh, in which no man can work."

"The *night* cometh!" Night is a season for rest. To the man exhausted by toil and watching, night is a welcome visitant. To the pilgrim, who has been sojourning in a strange land, rest from the toils of the way is welcome as sunrise to him who "watcheth for the morning." Thank God! "there remaineth a rest to the people of God," and the gate of Death is the portal through which the saint enters into that rest. When the last sheaves of the harvest are gathered, the spiritual husbandman bids farewell to all the toils of the field. When home has been reached, the pilgrim bids farewell to all the toils of the desert. When the last voyage has been finished, and his bark is safely anchored in the haven, the mariner bids farewell to all the toils of the sea. A farewell of this kind it was, which threw a splendour round the name of Mozart, brighter than any that ever emanated from his exquisite sensibility and fine genius. His *Requiem*, the

most perfect of all his productions, was written on his death-bed, and the first performance of it was made memorable by its proving his *farewell*, at once to Music and to Earth. The incident gave occasion for one of the most touching anecdotes ever told. He had been employed on the *Requiem* for several weeks. "His soul, filled with inspirations of richest melody, was claiming kindred with Immortality. After giving it his last touch, and breathing into it that undying spirit which was to consecrate it through all time as his finest and noblest strain, he fell into a gentle slumber. At length the light footsteps of his Emilie awoke him. 'Come hither,' said he; 'come hither, my Emilie. My task is done; the Requiem, my Requiem is finished. From Heaven's mercy alone do I look for aid in this dying hour. You spoke of refreshment, Emilie. Take these, my last notes; sit down to my Piano here, sing with them the hymn of your sainted mother; let me hear once more those notes that have been my solace and delight.' Emilie obeyed; and with a voice tremulous with emotion, sung the following beautiful lines:—

" 'Spirit! thy labour is o'er,  
 Thy term of probation is run,  
 Thy steps are now bound for the untrodden shore,  
 And the race of immortals begun.  
 Spirit! look not on the strife,  
 Or the pleasures of earth with regret;  
 Pause not on the threshold of limitless life  
 To mourn the day that is set.  
 Spirit! no fetters can bind,  
 No wicked have power to molest;  
 There the weary, like thee—the wretched shall find,  
 A haven—a mansion of rest.  
 Spirit! How bright is the road,  
 For which thou art now on the wing;  
 Thy Home it will be with thy Saviour and God,  
 Their loud hallelujahs to sing.'

"As she concluded, she dwelt for a moment on the low, melancholy notes of the piece; and then turning from

the instrument, looked in silence for the approving smile of the dying." It was the still, passionless smile, which the rapt and joyous spirit left under the seal of Death upon those features. Mozart, who had composed accompaniments to the *Messiah*—with such knowledge of effect, and so refined a taste, as not to derogate from the great work of the greatest composer that ever lived—had gone ! He now mingled his voice with the heavenly choir, and in strains as much superior to his own *Requiem* as heaven is to earth, chaunted, while Gabriel struck the harp, "*Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*" (Rev. v. 13.) But Mozart found no *Requiem* in the Psalmody of Heaven.

2. It is a REST from *pain and sorrow*.

Grief and pain chequer the whole course of man's earthly existence. The year of human life is marked by sorrows in all its quarters. Its spring has its varieties of blight and of tempest ; its summer has its sultry heat ; its autumn its seared leaf and miasma ; and its winter is characterised by frost and storm. What is true of other men is, so far as relates to natural evil, true of the Christian also. But God has graciously ordained that a life, so much marked by occasions of discomfort and of anguish, shall not last long. To make the load of our sufferings more tolerable, He has graciously ordained that we shall not long carry our sorrows. He has in the Holy Oracles revealed unto us a state of REST, beyond the skies, in which no scoff of conceit, nor scorn of pride, nor taunt of malignity, shall ever disturb the sweet repose of our spirits. There sickness shall never throw the blight of decline on the fair face of beauty, nor dry up the vigour in the limbs of the mighty, nor dissolve those dear bonds by which friends and families are bound together. That is a REST, where no craving want exists to ask an alms ; where no faltering step seeks support ; where no deep sense of desolation asks the cheering ministry of Hope, nor fearful apprehension the protection of MIGHT, nor gaunt

form of Misery the mitigation of Pity. There, health knows no decline ; friendship, no treason ; love, no blight ; and life, no end. The mystic voice in the Apocalypse informs us in relation to it that—“ *There is no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor shall there be any more pain. . . . And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*”

In that blessed State there are ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of God’s ransomed ones ; but there is not a heaving heart, not a wailing tongue, nor a weeping eye among them all ! “ *There,*” no Jacob is heard exclaiming, “ Few and evil have been my days !” There, no Job cries out, “ Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble !” There, no Solomon cries out under a profound sense of the emptiness of its enjoyments, “ Vanity of vanities, all is vanity and vexation of spirit !” There, no David exclaims, on the loss of a rebellious son, “ Absalom ! my son Absalom ! would to God I had died for thee !” And there, no Abraham, beholding the ravages of corruption on the corpse of his once beautiful and still beloved Sarah, expresses to his friends the desire that his dead should be buried out of his sight ! There the ransomed of the Lord are mounted above the cloud-region of doubt ; they dwell there, beyond the hurricane-range of grief and pain ! It is with admirable propriety that the saints, on their way to their rest, celebrate the bliss of “ that evergreen shore :”

“ We are joyously voyaging over the main,

Bound for the evergreen shore,

Whose inhabitants never of sickness complain,

And never see death any more.

Then let the hurricane roar,

It will the sooner be o’er ;

We will weather the blast, and land at last,

Safe on the evergreen shore.

We have nothing to fear from the wind and the wave,

Under our Saviour’s command ;

And our hearts in the midst of the dangers are brave,

For Jesus will bring us to land.

Both the winds and the waves our Commander controls ;  
 Nothing can baffle His skill ;  
 And His voice, when the thundering hurricane rolls,  
 Can make the loud tempest be still.

In the thick murky night, when the stars and the moon  
 Send not a glimmering ray ;  
 Then the light of His countenance, brighter than moon,  
 Will drive all our terror away.

Let the high heaving billow and mountainous wave,  
 Fearfully over head break ;  
 There is One by our side who can comfort and save,  
 There's One who will never forsake.

Let the vessel be wreck'd on the rock or the shoal,  
 Sink to be seen never more ;  
 He will bear none the less every passenger safe ;  
 Safe ! safe to the evergreen shore."

3. It is a REST from all the *conflicts* of life. The life of a good man is a succession of struggles. The imagery used by the sacred penmen to illustrate the Christian life has oftentimes a decidedly martial character. We are commanded to "fight the good fight of faith." We are to "put on the whole armour of God." We are to "fight, not as one that beateth the air." Again, the saints are spoken of as enduring "a great fight of afflictions ;" as having to experience "fightings without and fears within ;" as having "waxed valiant in fight." One of them says, "I have fought with beasts at Ephesus." And, towards the close of his honoured life, he cries out, "I have fought a good fight !" While they are yet in the flesh, they have to struggle with wicked men and Satan, but at death they are cheered with the assurance that they shall see their enemies no more. Temptation might reach them in the wilderness, but it will not assail them in the land of promise ; it might be presented to the soul on the high lands of Judea, but it is unknown to the spirits of the just on MOUNT SION ; it might find access to the heart in the earthly Jerusalem, but the *Jerusalem above* is beyond its range. *Here*, we have security only by the constant use of

our weapons; *there*, we shall hang up our armour, to use it no more, for ever. *Here*, we act our part amid scenes of turmoil; *there*, we shall dwell in the state of rest. The contrast between the Christian's condition *here* and his state *there* is well expressed in the following lines by H. More :—

“ *Here* bliss is short, imperfect, insecure,  
 But total, absolute, and perfect *there*.  
*Here* time's a moment, short our happiest state ;  
*There* infinite duration is our date.  
*Here* Satan tempts, and troubles e'en the best ;  
*There* Satan's power extends not to the blest.  
 In a weak, simple body, *Here* I dwell ;  
 But *There* I drop this frail and sickly shell.  
*Here* my best thoughts are stained with guilt and fear,  
 But love and pardon shall be perfect *There*.  
*Here* my best duties are defiled with sin ;  
*There* all is ease without, and peace within.  
*Here* feeble faith supplies my only light ;  
*There* faith and hope are swallowed up in sight.  
*Here* love of self my fairest works destroy ;  
*There* love of God shall perfect all my joy.  
*Here* things as in a glass are darkly shown ;  
*There* I shall know as clearly as I'm known.  
 Frail are the fairest flowers which bloom below ;  
*There* freshest palms on roots immortal grow.  
*Here* wants and cares perplex my anxious mind ;  
 But spirits *There*, a calm fruition find.  
*Here* disappointments my best schemes destroy ;  
*There* those that sowed in tears, shall reap in joy.  
*Here* vanity is stamped on all below ;  
 Perfection *There* on every good shall grow.  
*Here* my fond heart is fastened on some friend,  
 Whose kindness may, whose life must have an end ;  
 But *There* no failure can I ever prove,—  
 God cannot disappoint, for God is love.  
*Here* Christ for sinners suffered, groaned, and bled,  
 But *There* he reigns the great triumphant Head.  
*Here* mocked and scourged He wore a crown of thorns,  
 A crown of glory *There* His brow adorns.  
*Here* error clouds the will and dims the sight ;  
*There* all is knowledge, purity, and light.



*Here*, so imperfect is this mortal state,  
If blest myself, I mourn some other's fate.  
At every human woe I *Here* repine ;  
The joy of every saint shall *There* be mine.  
*Here*, if I lean, the world shall pierce my heart ;  
But *There* that broken reed and I shall part.  
*Here* on no promised good can I depend ;  
But *There* the Rock of Ages is my friend.  
*Here*, if some sudden joy delight inspire,  
The dread to lose it damps some rising fire ;  
But *There*, whatever good the soul employ,  
The thought that 'tis eternal crowns the joy."

What a delightful contrast ! How the believer will thank the Mercy that sent the blast which hurried him on to the heavenly rest ! With what ecstasies of grateful love will he recount the incidents of the voyage, and for ever bless the winds and storms which drove him into such a happy port ! It is said of the ten thousand Greeks whom Xenophon conducted from the very heart of the Persian empire over a distance of more than two thousand miles, that when they reached the Greek cities on the shores of the Euxine, they exclaimed, in transports of delight, "The sea ! the sea !" It is recorded of the Tartars, who revolted from the sway of the Czarina of Russia, in the latter part of the last century, that when, after indescribable sufferings, endured in a flight of thousands of miles over pathless, treeless, waterless wastes, along the margins of many mighty nations, these children of the wilderness found shelter and safety at length under shade of the Great Wall of China ; they commemorated the event by the institution of a religious solemnity, and, further, by the erection of two grand columnar monuments of granite and of brass. These monuments of a nation's gratitude were raised upon the very margin of the last waste through which they passed. Think, reader, of the shouts of transport with which the saint, in his pathway to his final home, will hail the bright objects which attract his notice as he issues from this scene of strife into the regions of the blessed ! Think of the

monument which gratitude will prompt him to rear to commemorate the mighty deliverance which Infinite Mercy hath wrought out for him ! You say there is no monument. But there are the insignia of triumph ; “ they have palms in their hands ; ” and there is the victor’s shout of “ Salvation to our God, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb,” with which, at the close of all his conflicts, the saint will hail the REST ! the EVERLASTING Rest in the land of the Blessed !—

“ Woe and wailing shall be o’er then ;  
Weeping shall be heard no more then ;  
Let us quickly, sweetly soar, then,  
To the land of the bless’d.

Not an eye shall shed a tear, there ;  
None shall feel a grief or fear, there ;  
Every face a smile shall wear, there,  
In the land of the bless’d.

They whose wounded bleeding heart, here,  
Learn’d how hard it was to part, here,  
Hoped, amid the sharpest smart, here,  
For the land of the bless’d.

Softest zephyrs o’er them blow, there,  
Streams of life immortal flow, there,  
Those they lov’d they’ll love and know, there,  
In the land of the bless’d.

Finest radiance smiling round them,  
Still increasing joy hath found them,  
Ever since death’s Angel crown’d them,  
For the land of the bless’d.

Woe and wailing shall be o’er then,  
Weeping shall be known no more then ;  
Let us quickly sweetly soar, then,  
To the land of the bless’d.

How often has every faithful minister observed a state of mind in the dying Christian answering with singular exactness to the ideal sketch here presented by the Muse of Durant ! And how exactly must have answered to this ideal the experience of the Hebrew exile on the banks of the Chebar, to

whom the Angel of Destiny announced dismissal from all the toils and troubles and conflicts of life, in these memorable words, "*Go thou thy way, and REST till the end be ; for thou shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days.*" (Dan. xii. 13.)

Let it not be thought, however, that this is a rest analogous to that which the ancients fabled as being enjoyed by the Epicurean Deity, lost in drowsy carelessness and sloth ; it is rather, as the great John Howe regards it, the rational rest of one who has a certain knowledge that his state is simply the best, and includes the reality, not the semblance, of happiness ; the free, chosen rest of a soul who can say of *itself*, as the prophet minstrel represents the Deity as saying of *Himself*, "This is my rest ; here will I dwell, for I have *desired* it ;" the steady, complacential rest of one who is bound to his destiny by the cords of love, and cries out, "The Lord is my portion !" "Whom have I in heaven but Thee ?"—a rest of vigorous action, in which all the powers of the moral being have "their triumph and exultation" in the undeviating conformity of the soul's moral action to the law and the nature of the DEITY ; finally, a rest in which the soul is satisfied with the fruitions of immortal blessedness. The heavenly state is all this without toil or pain, or grief or strife, and hence it is called "a *Rest*." If this be the SAINT'S REST, who would not join the sainted Henry in exclaiming, "O that I were THERE !"

In addition to the views already expressed on HEAVEN as a state of *personal* perfectibility and of rest, we must now consider it as a state of *glory*.

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## IX.

### HEAVEN AS A STATE.

#### A STATE OF GLORY.

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IN a former part of this work, we dwelt at some length on the glory of Heaven as a Place; we come to contemplate its glory as a STATE, in which all the rays of glory commingle together, like the prismatic rays in the light of day. The testimonies of the inspired writers on this subject are various and multiplied. Sometimes the word used to convey this idea is *Honour*. Thus, "He will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and *honour*, and immortality, eternal life" (Romans ii. 6, 7)—words almost identical in import with those employed by the Apostle Peter to describe the glorious distinction conferred upon our Lord by the Divine Father. "For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (2 Peter i. 17.) Sometimes the word employed for this purpose is CROWN or CROWNS. Thus, in allusion to the contrasted issue of the Olympic struggle and the Christian conflict, Paul says, "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now, they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an *incorruptible*." (1 Cor. ix. 25.) In like manner James says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the *crown of life*, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." (Chap. i. ver. 12.) Then, in the Apocalypse, the saint is exhorted to vigilance, that "no man take his *crown*;"

that he may receive the "*crown of life*" which is promised unto him. (Rev. ii. 10 ; iii. 11.) As we advance in the perusal of those wonderful visions, we behold the THRONE of the Divine Sovereign, "and round about it are four-and-twenty seats : and upon the seats . . . four-and-twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they have on their heads *crowns of gold*." (Chap. iv. ver. 4.) And in the same chapter, we read that "the four-and-twenty elders fell down before Him that sat on the throne, and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast *their crowns* before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. iv. 10, 11.) Here, again, the glory of the saints is of the same description as that of our Lord, differing only in eminence; for of Him we read that on "His head were *many crowns*."

The "crown" of the Elder is the symbol of exaltation and triumph. Paul anticipated "a crown;" "a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge," would give unto him, and the Hope had cheered him in many an hour of gloom and suffering. The apostle had often thought of this glorious distinction; it was not a crown of *glory* merely, but of *righteousness*, which Paul anticipated. It is generally thought that Paul in these words, as well as in some other passages, makes allusion to the ancient games. If so, it can have been only to institute a contrast between the glory which awaits the pious man at death, and the rewards bestowed on the victors in those games. What were those rewards? In the Olympian games, the prize was a wreath of wild olives; in the Pythian, certain apples, consecrated to Apollo, and garlands of laurel; in the Nemæan, the rewards were crowns of parsley; and in the Isthmian, the most sacred of all Grecian games, the victors were originally crowned with garlands of pine-leaves, of laurel, or of parsley, dry and withered instead of fresh, as in the Nemæan games. The victor in the Christian race,—the conqueror in the Christian warfare,—has also his

reward. But it is not a crown of olives, of pine-leaves, of laurel, or of parsley. No, it is "a crown of righteousness," suited to the moral struggles to which his life has been devoted—"a crown that fadeth not away!"

In the Grecian games, there was always some highly distinguished individual who presided; he observed the aspirants in the race and in the fight, and awarded the prize to him to whom it was due. Besides this illustrious personage, there were present at these contests the most celebrated characters in all Greece, especially the veterans who had themselves won in the race and conquered in the fight, and before this cloud of witnesses the *athletæ* put forth all their power and skill. In like manner myriads of conquerors, bending from their thrones in glory, look down on the arena wherein the saints maintain the contest, not only with flesh and blood, but all the powers of Hell. Myriads who themselves had gone through the struggles of the race and of the combat, are witnesses of their struggles. And high and glorious among them is the Divine Redeemer, who was Himself "made perfect through suffering." There He sits enthroned in the midst of them all, and at the close of the struggle he bestows the prize on every successful combatant. After the victor in the ancient games had been declared, the crown and palm were awarded him. A herald, preceded by a trumpeter, conducted him through the stadium, and proclaimed aloud his name and country. He passed before all the people, who greeted him with loud acclamations. When he returned to his own country, the people came out in a body to meet him, and conducted him into the city, adorned with all the marks of his victory. He was honoured with a public entry into his native city, and all concluded with a feast at the public expense. In like manner, when the Christian triumphs over all his antagonists in the hour and article of death, he is taken before "the righteous Judge" by a celestial escort; the palm of victory is put into his hand, and the crown of righteousness is placed on his immortal brow, amid the acclamations of angels and of "the

Church of the firstborn." He is not altogether a stranger. Ministering angels remember him, and glorified saints recognize him. He is honoured with a seat on the throne of the King of kings and Lord of lords! The *Te Deum*, not of Ambrose, but of the heavenly Choir, is chanted in celebration of the mercy which has raised a child of earth to such eminence of glory; and the triumph winds up with a feast that shall never end, in which ransomed millions share in the presence of the Lord of all;—a feast of the understanding and of the heart, and a feast of glory suited to the strongest and most refined passion for glory, bestowed on the sons of glory by the Lord of glory!

The "many crowns" on the head of our Lord are representations of His successive triumphs, and signs of His authority over different communities combined—over all the races of earth—and over all "the principalities and powers in heavenly places."

Once more, we find the word "*throne*" or "*thrones*" employed to indicate the glory of the state of the Redeemed. Thus, in the visions mentioned above, the following remarkable promise is made: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit *with me in My throne*, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne." (Chap. iii. ver. 21.) Again, we read in one of the last visions of this book, the following remarkable announcement: "I saw *thrones*, and them that sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and who had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, nor in their hands; and they lived and *reigned with Christ* a thousand years." (Chap. xx. ver. 4.) Here again we find a striking resemblance between the glory of our Lord and that of His ransomed people. They are both *enthroned*.

But finally, be it observed that "*glory*" is the word most commonly employed to describe the eminence and the honour

of the Saints in a future state. The believer is said to be called by God to His "kingdom and *glory*." (1 Thess. ii. 12.) Christ, as the Captain of our Salvation, brings "many sons to *glory*." (Heb. ii. 10.) He is, to the believer, "the hope of *glory*." (Col. i. 27.) The "believer is called to *glory* and virtue;" "he is called to eternal *glory*" by Jesus Christ. (1 Peter v. 10; 2 Peter i. 4.) At last, the Saint will appear "with Him in *glory*" (Col. iii. 4), whom the Apostle James designates "the Lord of *GLORY*." (Chap. ii. ver. 1.) Then again, St. Paul, contrasting the future destiny of the believer with his present condition, says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the *glory* that shall be revealed in us." (Rom. viii. 18.)

What a striking passage! How full it is of the language of careful consideration and of decided conviction! Paul had carefully considered the various sources of suffering in the present world. He knew grief, and pain, and disease to be inseparable conditions of our mortal existence. As the ivy firmly adheres to the walls of the dismantled castle, or the trunk of the withered tree, so is suffering the invariable lot of mortals. Paul knew this lot of humanity by painful experience. In the sufferings of the present state that he alludes to, there were storms of misfortune—there were pains and diseases—there were perils among false brethren—there were enemies in league with the principalities and powers of darkness, with whom he and his brethren were doomed to unceasing conflict. But the apostle knew that there was a safe haven in the world of glory, where his bark might safely anchor, sheltered from every storm; a harbour of refuge, where he might find protection against all his foes, whether of earth or hell. It was not merely that he expected Death to prove an anodyne for all the pains and sorrows of life, but that he knew of raptures in the land of the Blessed, one gust of which would more than compensate for all the pains and sorrows of mortal existence; there were glories also too



varied, too multiplied, and too intense for mortal powers of speech—glories which not even Christian Hope, illumined though it might be by Revelation, was able to grasp. As the merchant at the end of the year draws up a balance-sheet, with all his items of expenditure on one side and those of income on the other, and compares the one with the other, in order to ascertain his position with respect to worldly good, so the apostle here places against each “the sufferings of the present time,” and “the glory that shall be revealed in us.” Like a careful accountant, he enters minutely into every item. To each particular he assigns its exact value, and all the sufferings are put together on one side of the balance-sheet. On the other he puts the palm of victory!—the crown of glory!—the honour of being made “kings and priests unto God!”—the throne of glory!—the powers of the glorified soul!—the glorified body! to which decay shall never apply its withering touch—the glorious fellowship of angels, and the glorious society of the redeemed, from which Death shall never carry off a solitary member!—that “fulness of joy” which such avocations will inspire, and those “pleasures for evermore” which utterly eclipse the choicest reminiscences of memory, and the fairest creations of the imagination! He sums up the account of his sufferings, and that operation is soon completed. He attempts to sum up the other column, but at every step he feels that his values, instead of being exact, are only approximate. He advances carefully. The operation, we may suppose, is carried on for months and years, until the accumulated values, as he advances, wax to such dimensions that reason is not able to grasp them, while imagination is outdone by the mighty accumulation, and he throws up his task with these memorable words, “I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not *worthy to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us!”

Paul recurs to this subject again in one of the epistles to the Corinthians, and exhausts all the resources of language

in an effort to minify the afflictions incident to the present life, and to give a lively impression of "the glory that shall be revealed in us." "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. iv. 17.) The idea intended to be conveyed by the apostle is, not that the affliction was of no weight absolutely, but that it was levity itself when compared with the *glory* which is to be revealed. What is glory? It is a word of various import. Applied to material objects, it denotes splendour, as when one speaks of the glory of the sun; applied to men, it is often a kind of deification of lofty powers of action, as when we speak of the glory of heroes, and sometimes it attaches to persons occupying a high position in society, and asserting a prodigious influence in human affairs, as when we speak of the glory of princes. Probably, in the majority of instances among mortals, glory, as John Foster remarks, is "vanity turned into a god," in which character, we may add, it has more worshippers than ever bowed at the shrine of Jove or Apollo. In Paul's vocabulary, it has a purer and more lofty import. It denotes whatever is most lofty—whatever is most magnificent in the destiny of the redeemed.

It includes *local* glory, that is, glory of *place*. The Scriptures have assigned it "a local habitation and a name" of the most exalted character. Paradise is the term for every form of beauty. Heaven, in this view, is the native region of glory. The richest and most valuable of earthly things occupy a very subordinate position in heaven. The precious stones that we so much admire are assigned a place in the foundation of the City in the skies; the gold, for which persons are ready to pass through every kind of adventure, from Indus to the Pole, is worked up in the pavements of the Jerusalem which is above. The glories of sun, moon, and stars, the most admired glories of earth, are thrown aside as useless in those realms of light, which are lit up with the splendours of the Divine countenance.

It is *personal* glory.

Personal glory has rarely been realized in this dull state, and then only for a brief period. We have an example in the face of Moses, when he came down from the Mount. The most notable example of this kind, however, occurred in the history of our Lord. We allude to the transfiguration on the Mount, when His body was like the sun shining in his strength, and his raiment white and glistening. What a splendid destiny it would be for any mortal hero to be so favoured as that all the sunbeams that fell on him during a summer's day should be, by some special law, fixed there, investing him with a halo of glory! And then, again, how much more splendid the destiny would be if he were made as glorious in mind as in body; if his soul should be as radiant with moral and intellectual glory as his person with material splendour, and he were thus transfigured in both body and spirit! Well, this is all included in the glory of the heavenly state.

It is glory of *rank*. As the rank of man in this world is higher than that of the other denizens of the globe, so the believer shall, in a future state, be exalted above the common herd of intelligent beings; become a more conspicuous object—a being who, both from natural endowments and conferred honours, as one of the Lord's anointed, shall possess, to use one of Jonathan Edwards' phrases, a larger amount of being than others, and have his name written in characters of glory. To be thus distinguished were glorious indeed! And the believer shall be so distinguished in the most glorious city of the universe—in the very palace of the King who dwelleth in light unapproachable, "and who only hath immortality!" It will be the enjoyment of *substantial* glory—"weight of glory." The word "glory" is borrowed, as we have remarked, from the splendour of the sun; but this kind of glory is imponderable. The believer's glory is so substantial that Paul speaks of it as "a *weight* of glory." This allusion to weight is introduced with the object of contrasting "the glory" to be

revealed in a future state with the affliction “of the present time.” The apostle had qualified the term “*affliction*” by an epithet which carries in it the idea of the extreme levity—“this *light* affliction;” and he qualifies the term “glory” by an epithet which is adapted to convey the strongest impression of the substantiality of the glory—“this *weight* of glory:” this glory is substantial in opposition to that exceedingly vapoury thing which often bears the name. It is a glory personally felt by the subject of it, in opposition to that worldly glory which is so often ascribed by others to certain individuals when they have no consciousness of personal participation in what is so ascribed to them; as in the case of the heroes of Thermopylæ and Trafalgar, who, though amongst the most glorious of their class, were, many of them, never privileged to feel any personal participation of the glory ascribed to them in the annals of war.

*A weight of glory!* It is impossible to attend to this expression without perceiving that the object of the apostle was to impress us with the marvellous combination of all the rays—the concentration, so to speak, of all the elements of glory in the recompense of the Blessed. And only think to what an extent the concentration of these glorious elements must be carried before any one would presume to speak of the “weight” of their glory. The principle of heat is, like light, exceedingly subtle. We have examples of its becoming amazingly concentrated: so with respect to light; but it never occurred to any one to designate the largest amount of these fluids in their most concentrated states, a *weight* of heat, or a *weight* of light. But such is the wonderful concentration of all the elements of glory in the eternal portion of the just, that the apostle here designates it “a weight of glory!” Happy soul!—he is destined to enjoy a concentrated essence of glory.

Supposing it to be a substance, it may be a question as to whether all the light which has fallen on the earth for the last six thousand years, would, if collected in one solid mass

and put into an apothecary's scales, weigh down a single ounce of brass ; but such is the *substantiality* of the believer's glory in contrast to that of all others, that the apostle calls it, in the use of a strong figure of speech, a "weight of glory."

But this is not all. This blessedness will be the enjoyment of glory in its noblest forms, and in its highest degree : "a *far more exceeding weight* of glory." As the apostle had added epithet to epithet in his attempt to inspire us with a sense of the littleness of our sufferings, so he heaps hyperbole on hyperbole while describing the greatness of that glory to which these sufferings, by the sovereign grace of God, are made to conduce. He utterly exhausts all the powers of language in his attempt to describe this glory. His epithets are of the strongest description. They are of all the degrees of comparison—positive, comparative, and superlative—heaped together in one mountain-mass of words. But the grand effect of all is only to convey the fact, that this glory cannot be adequately described.

It is only necessary that you should strive to combine in idea the various elements of which it will consist—the glory of scenery with the glory of person, and those with the glory of mind, and superadd to the rest the glory of rank among the celestial hierarchies, in order to feel the force of this magnificent hyperbole. The subject is worthy of the figure ! What is all the glory of mortal man in comparison of the future glory of the saint ? Think of any form of glory you please, and you will find it eclipsed by this. What are the forms of glory that crowd the field of thought ? Is it the glory of *heroic deeds* performed, in the face of death, on the battle-field ? Alas ! when the hero dies, to him all his glory becomes as a dead letter. What avails to the Iron Duke all the funeral pomp with which a nation's sorrow signalled the interment of his remains ? What the splendid sarcophagus to an Alexander ? What the triumphal arch of a Titus to that prince ? and all the other proud monuments of hero-worship to other Heroes ? The believer's laurels are

evergreen, his deeds are recorded on high, his recompense is the crown of glory, "that fadeth not away." Is it the *glory of power*? Conquerors have occupied lofty thrones, they have worn glorious crowns indeed; but if it is the *glory of power* you admire, then the believer reigns in heaven. His brow is encircled with immortal honour, and he wields a sceptre that shall never be broken. Is it the *glory of intellect*, the noblest form of glory which the unrenewed can inherit? But what is this glory, even in the case of the astronomer, who seems almost to have scaled the heights of creation—and has doubtless penetrated, by the fertile resources of his genius, through the enclosures of heaven, immensely beyond that starry stratum with which our globe is connected? But what is even this in comparison of the glory of a being of loftier aspirings who has soared in person to the grand central world—penetrated within the veil that conceals Deity from the observation of mortals, and now knows as he is known?

In the future blessedness of a good man is included the enjoyment of this surpassing glory through all eternity. It is "eternal glory." Here, again, the apostle speaks antithetically, the word "eternal" being employed to intensify the idea of the believer's glory in contrast of that word "moment," with which he had qualified his "affliction;" and his object obviously is to reduce the "affliction" of the present time to nothing in comparison of "the glory that shall be revealed in us."

What a contrast, again, we observe between the glory that "shall be revealed," in the case of God's suffering people, and the glory of this world, "which passeth away!" Impressed with the evanescence of worldly distinction in all its forms, we may take up the oft-repeated interrogatory, and utter it, in reference to all the sons of Ambition,—Where is their glory fled? Search for it on the page of history, and you will find but its shadow. Listen for it in the impassioned strains of a nation's minstrelsy, and you will hear but its echo. You may, perhaps,

find something more substantial in a gallery of wax-work. You may find the more illustrious of the statesmen, the orators, and the warriors of the age in full size there,—Fox standing by the side of Pitt, Napoleon mingling in the same group with our Iron Duke. In figure, complexion, and stature you behold the most striking verisimilitude, but it is resemblance only—the *reality* of glory is gone; no power of will, no process of thought, no faculty of speech, no wand of state, no rod of empire can be detected there. The orators no longer occupy the arena of debate, and touch chords of sympathy that vibrate in their partisans through the length and breadth of the land; the warriors no longer utter those imperious mandates which, ere now, have moved half the world to “shouts of battle and shock of arms.” The barren rock of a southern ocean no longer serves as a platform from which the Corsican chieftain may look back on the former fields of his glory; the marshals’ batons bestowed by the proudest potentates of Europe no longer gratify the ambition of the British hero, or suggest to his recollection the laurels and victories of a hundred well-fought fields. Alas! their glory is fled, at least, so far as the enjoyment of any personal interest by themselves is concerned. But the glory of the suffering Christian is a great reality, and it is all *before* him. From the height of the delectable mountains yonder, he is privileged to gaze on fields of glory that shall never vanish from the sight: they are the glories of Immortality. In this high attribute of immortality, as well as in all its other characteristics, the believer’s glory is perfectly unique: there is nothing like it in all the other realms of fame. Other glory will be obscured by the mist of ages, which old Time will be sure, sooner or later, to throw around it; or it may be turned into shame by the steady progress of mankind in the career of intellectual and moral enlightenment; but this is a glory whose radiance shall increase for ever—a glory which is most highly appreciated by beings of the greatest stretch of *capacity* and elevation of moral sentiment! Accordingly, the

testimony of Revelation is uniform on the immortality of the believer's honours, on the everlasting duration of his bliss. O, what a glorious consummation to anticipate!—a throne of glory!—a crown of glory!—mansions of glory!—a river of glory!—a city of glory!—a sea of glory!—a song of glory!—a companionship in glory!—visions of glory!—a mind permeated with glory!—a body radiant all over with glory!—angels of glory!—a world of glory!—a God of glory!—a glorified Redeemer!—an immortality of glory!

No wonder, then, that the Christian, with this glorious hope!—the hope of immortality! should welcome death as the last event of his pilgrimage, and that which offers him a clear passage to this state of glory. He says, as to his continuance in the present state, "While we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord." And he is "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." He has "a desire to depart." He regards death as "gain"—eternal gain. Nor is the gain of dying, in his case, a matter merely of rational conviction, which exerts no particular influence over his will and affections. He often feels his heart so drawn towards the grand realities of the unseen world, that he exclaims with the King of Israel, "O that I had wings like a dove; for then would I fly away and be at rest." Death he regards as a great and important change, but a change for the better. Hence, instead of dreading it as "a gulph of sorrow," he welcomes it as "a port of liberty." Instead of mourning over it as the event which separates between him and all that his heart holds dear, he hails it as the avenue which leads to that *glorious state* in which he shall be with "Christ, which is far better." The poet has well described the final scene, where the good man meets his fate with these words on his lips:—

"I journey forth rejoicing,  
From this vale of tears,  
To heavenly joy, and freedom  
From earthly bonds and fears ;



Where Christ our Lord shall gather  
 All His redeemed again,  
 His kingdom to inherit:  
 Good night! till then!

I go to see His glory,  
 Whom we have loved below,  
 I go the blessed angels,  
 The holy saints to know;  
 Our lovely one departed,  
 I go to find again,  
 And wait for you to join us:  
 Good night! till then!

I hear the Saviour calling;  
 The joyful hour has come;  
 The angel-guards are ready  
 To guide me to our home;  
 Where Christ our Lord shall gather  
 All His redeemed again,  
 His kingdom to inherit:  
 Good night! till then!"

He says "Good night!" as the shade of death is falling on him, but this is the last glimpse of night he shall ever have; for "there is no night there." O, blessed scene! where the last storm having spent its fury, the Haven breaks into view, and high above it, far beyond the gloomy hills of darkness, Mount Zion, like some loftier Teneriffe, not enveloped in clouds, but bathed in a sea of *glory*. Thrice blessed moment! when, as the flesh is quivering under the last dart of the foe, and the deepest gloom of mortality's midnight is passing, he hears the ministering angel whisper in his ear these words of transport—"There is no pain! There is no night there!" The raptures of that moment were more than a compensation for all the toils of the pilgrimage multiplied a million-fold; and for all the perils of the passage, though they had begun with the Apostacy and stretched over sixty centuries, instead of being bounded by the threescore years and ten, which the Psalmist speaks of, as the common limit of man's mortal existence.

## X.

### THE EMPLOYMENTS OF THE REDEEMED IN HEAVEN.

#### THE UNSOLVED PROBLEMS CLEARED UP.

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HEAVEN is a place of Rest, but not a dormitory, in which the soul shall have an eternal sleep. It is a place of freedom from toil, pain, grief, conflict; in short, from all the evils of life, but not a region from which intellectual occupations and holy activities have been banished. We know nothing of absolute Rest in the Universe. It may well be doubted whether there is an atom in God's dominions which is absolutely at rest. If we look at the operation of chemical laws among the elements of which the earth's crust is composed, we find them ever and anon changing their relation to each other, and forming new compounds. If we observe the organic laws which operate in the vegetable world, we find them conducing to an endless variety of changes in vegetable products. If we look at the solid globe itself, we discover that it rotates on its axis at the rate of a thousand miles an hour, and whirls round the sun in its orbit at the rate of more than seventy thousand miles an hour. We see the same unceasing motions in the other planets, and also in the satellites, which revolve round them as centres, in the same way as our moon revolves round the earth. The Sun himself rotates on his axis, and the rings of Saturn round that body. We behold our system—sun, planets, satellites, comets, and all—in the course of translation in the direction of the constellation Hercules. We see the double stars revolving round each other, and Astronomers have come to the adoption of a notion thrown out more than half

a century ago by the celebrated American divine, Dr. Timothy Dwight, that the whole material Universe is constantly revolving round some vast central world, on which is established the throne of the great Artificer Himself, in the midst of His works. If matter, organic and inorganic, be thus constantly in motion, with how much stronger reason may we expect mind, purged from the imperfection of its earthly state, to commence in heaven a career of unceasing activity? If *now* the grand distinguishing characteristic of mind be its power of *thinking*, then a state of existence in which the soul has most vigour must be characterized by the highest manifestations of this quality. Such being the case, on what, may it be presumed, will man exercise the higher faculties of a nobler state and of a brighter world? We answer—

*In grappling with the unsolved problems of his former state of being.* When Newton had satisfied himself that the apple descended to the earth by the power of attraction, he directed his attention to the Moon, with the object of discovering whether it kept in its orbit round the earth by the same law. In like manner, when Man has solved the great problem as to what is the mode of being and what the nature of perception in another world, he may be supposed to direct his attention to such of the UNSOLVED PROBLEMS of his former state as are adapted permanently to interest beings in another world. Those problems are numerous, and relate to widespread fields of inquiry.

We find such problems in NATURE, and that notwithstanding that your half-fledged philosopher deports himself in this region as if he had means of progress scarcely inferior to those with which the sublimest of poets has invested the prince of the Fallen Angels :—

“ O’er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense or rare,  
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,  
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.”

It is not denied that in this, man has made greater progress than in any other department of knowledge ; but even here

his boasted attainments are adapted only to remind one of a mathematical superficies that has length and breadth, without depth or thickness. His proudest attainments scarcely reach beyond the mere alphabet of knowledge. Compared with the vast domain of truth, the most expanded mind of man is but as an animalcule to an ocean, or as the ultimate atom of the atomic theory to the whole universe of matter. As now and then he brings up a new truth to observation, he may exclaim, while devoutly adoring the God of Truth, "Lo, these are only part of Thy ways, and how small a portion is known of Thee!"

How limited is our knowledge with respect to the wide range of existence! The imperfect state of our information concerning the varieties of being, well known to the philosophers of the last century, has been strikingly illustrated in this by numerous remains of extinct species of animals which have been recently discovered in the stratified crust of the globe, some of them bearing no resemblance to any species extant, others presenting monstrous combinations of the characteristic features of two or three distinct species. And every year, almost every month, brings to light some new remains in the great charnel-house of the ancient world. Nor is there reason to believe that aught but the limitation of research will prevent an indefinite enlargement of the catalogue in ages yet to come.

Again, how limited is our knowledge with respect to the antiquity of the globe! We know, indeed, by indubitable evidence, that at a comparatively recent period it was prepared by Almighty power and Infinite wisdom as the dwelling-place of man and contemporary animals, but scientific inquiry has shown as indubitably that it had many and long chronologies before ever man planted his foot upon it. Geology has been often designated the poetry of science, and its professors have demonstrated the existence of a pre-Adamic ocean, in which the Ammonite floated, on the principle of the life-boat, myriads of ages before human sagacity discovered that prin-

ciple. They have also presumed to indicate the quarter whence the wind blew, during the deposition of certain portions of primeval strata on its margin. They have silenced expression of wonder at the minute anatomical research, which fixed the number of bones in the human skeleton at more than two hundred, by bringing before our notice animals of the pre-Adamic world, whose bones are not counted by hundreds but by tens of thousands, or whose petrified fragments form the chief traits of beauty in the marble mantelpieces in the wealthiest countries on the globe. Nay, more, as the reigning monarch of England, through the courtesy of the first illustrious Herschel, acquired a name among the stars at the discovery of the planet which now bears the name of that great discoverer, after that monarch had lost in the fortunes of war, the United provinces of the New World, so these geological professors have turned Jupiter Ammon—a mythological character in ancient superstition—since his fabulous history has been utterly exploded throughout the world of letters, to real use for the first time in the geological cabinet, deriving from the coiled horn of his statues, a name for a pre-Adamic creature of the same shape, whose drawing is said to have been made of colouring matter, which the artist extracted from the Ammonite's own fossil ink-bag!

But, brilliant as has been the course of geological discovery, geologists have not been able to do more than supply a very indefinite answer as to the antiquity of the genera and species of the pre-Adamic world, and a still more indefinite answer as to the antiquity of the globe itself. Their assurance, however, on most questions, might seem to imply that their deductions are more rigorously exact in certain cases than they really are. But every science has supplied examples of the want of that modesty, which is the chief ornament of the philosophic character. Nor is this greatly surprising. Man is so prone to vanity, that his discoveries have made him feel as if all nature were in his power, and all knowledge within his reach. Accordingly, he is slow, exceedingly slow,

to receive the impression that human inquiry has its limits, and often remains practically unconscious of the fact, until dashed in his impetuous course against the iron boundary which encloses those secrets which are known to God alone.

Again, how limited is man's knowledge with respect to the extent of the universe! Nor is this owing to want of effort, or of enterprise in scientific inquiry. Those inquirers are not justly chargeable with want of effort, or of intelligent enterprise, who have weighed the planets, observed the revolutions of the double stars, and discovered a general law of matter, which, probably, extends in its operation to the remotest regions of creation. But their science is nevertheless a blank, equally with respect to the living population, and the physical constitution of the heavenly bodies. Of both the one and the other it is almost as uninformed as the naturalist concerning the history and habits of the gorilla. True, navigators have sailed round the earth; philosophers have determined with mathematical precision the length of its polar and its equatorial axis, and have ascertained its contents in cubic miles. They have measured the distances of the moon, and of the sun. They have ascertained the places and orbits of the planets. But what is known of the magnitudes and distances of the stars? What of their numbers and varieties? Or, who ever calculated the amount of telescopic power that would conduct mortal vision to those remote regions of space where are fixed the frontiers of Jehovah's empire? We boast that the microscope has magnified an atom into a world!—that the telescope has resolved streaks of light in the Milky Way into clusters of stars! But an instrument whose field of vision should take in the whole material system remains a desideratum in science, which no degree of ingenuity is likely to supply. Until it is supplied, we must say of the unexplored portions of the universe—but in a much stronger sense—what has been so beautifully said in reference to other scenes:—

“There are hills beyond the Pentlands, and streams beyond the Forth.”

Our readers will not misunderstand us. Nothing can be farther from our purpose than to create a universal distrust of human knowledge, and scorn of the human understanding. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that man's acquirements, even where he has access to the facts, is approximate towards the truth, rather than a clear apprehension of it. "We see through a glass darkly." Moreover, his ignorance of the hidden constitution of things—the employment of verbal symbols to assist the understanding in the process of thinking—and, more than all the rest, his extreme susceptibility of prejudice, all go to stamp, more or less deeply, the impress of error on the most standard issue of the human intellect, while the want of an exact correspondence between thought and the symbols by which it is expressed, renders language an imperfect instrument of converse between mind and mind. No doubt many of our mental difficulties proceed from this source, but there are others, and perhaps the greater number, that proceed from sheer incapacity to grapple with the great problems of being. Professor Rogers has put this matter before us in a strong light, in his essay on "Reason and Faith." He says, "Perhaps the most striking example of the helplessness to which man is soon reduced, if he relies on his reason alone, is the spectacle of the issue of his investigations into that which one would suppose he must know most intimately, if he knows anything, and that is his own nature—his own mind. . . . We cannot fully enter into the absurdities of its condition, except by remembering that it is our own wise selves that so grotesquely bewilder us. The mind, on such occasions, takes itself (if we may so speak) into its own hands, turns it about as a savage would a watch, or a monkey a letter; interrogates itself, listens to the echo of its own voice, and is obliged, after all, to lay it down again with a very puzzled expression, and acknowledge that of its very self, itself knows little or nothing! 'I am material,' exclaims one of these whimsical beings to whom the heaven descended, 'know thyself' would seem to have been ironically addressed.

'No! immaterial,' says another. 'I am both material and immaterial,' and exclaims perhaps the very same mind at different times. 'Thought itself may be matter modified,' says one. 'Rather,' says another of the same perplexed species, 'matter is thought modified, for what you called matter is but a phenomenon.' 'Both are independent and totally distinct substances, mysteriously, inexplicably conjoined,' says a third. 'How they are conjoined we know no more than the dead.' Not so much, perhaps? 'Do I ever cease to think?' says the mind to itself, even in sleep. Is not my essence thought? 'You ought to know your own essence best,' all creation will reply. 'I am confident,' says one, 'that I never do cease to think, not even in the soundest sleep.' 'You do for a long time every night of your life,' exclaims another, equally confident and equally ignorant. 'Where do I exist?' it goes on. 'Am I in the brain?' 'Am I in the whole body?' 'Am I anywhere?' 'Am I nowhere?' 'I cannot have any local existence, for I am immaterial,' says one. 'I have a local existence because I am material,' says another. 'I have a local existence though I am not material,' says a third. 'Are my habitual actions voluntary, however rapid they become?' it exclaims; 'though I am unconscious of these volitions when they attain a certain rapidity; or do I become a mere automaton as respects such actions? and therefore an automaton nine times out of ten when I act at all?' To this query two opposite answers are given by different minds, and by others, perhaps wiser, none at all, while often opposite answers are given by the same mind at different times. In like manner has every action, every operation, every emotion of the mind been made the subject of endless doubt and disputation. Surely, if, as Soame Jenyns imagined, the infirmities of man and even graver evils were permitted in order to afford amusement to superior intelligences and make the angels laugh, few things could afford them better sport than the perplexities of this child of clay engaged in the study of himself. 'Alas!' exclaims at last the baffled spirit of this



babe in intellect, as he surveys his shattered toys—his broken theories of metaphysics, ‘I know that I am; but what I am, where I am, even how I act, not only what is my essence, but what even my mode of operation,—of all this I know nothing; and boast of reason as I may, all that I think on these points is matter of opinion, or is matter of faith.’ He resembles, in fact, nothing so much as a kitten introduced to its own image in a mirror; she runs to the back of it, she leaps over it, she turns, and twists, and jumps, and frisks in all directions, in the vain attempt to reach the fair illusion; and at length turns away in weariness from that incomprehensible enigma, the image of herself.”

Such is man’s bewildered state as to that little microcosm which he calls *self*. Is it not strange that such a being should approach the Divine Ruler as revealed in the scheme of Revelation in a spirit of ignorant but proud familiarity, which is repelled from the study of the sacred page, by whatever of mystery may beset his path? It is, as Rogers—borrowing an illustration from Goldsmith’s little beau up five flights of steps in a garret, boasting of his friendship with nobles, and we know not whom—puts it; this lilliputian specimen of the *genus homo* is exceedingly “apt to assume airs of magnificence, and glancing at the infinite through his little eye-glass,” to affect an intimate acquaintance with all the more recondite secrets of being.

Whether the human mind, in its glorified state, will arrive at truth by the objects of inquiry being unfolded to it, the instant the mental eye is directed towards them, in the same way as we now arrive at self-evident truths; or whether by careful induction, but without the painful effort and the risk of error which attend on such inquiries in the present state? are questions that we cannot determine. Neither are we able to determine the share which the testimony of angels may have in the enlargement of our knowledge with respect to the chronology of the universe, or certain parts of it; this is another question on which we cannot speak with certainty. It may be that

our stock of self-evident truths will be enlarged beyond all our most sanguine dreams. It may be that we shall learn the chronology of the various parts of the material system from "the morning stars that sung together, and the sons of God that shouted for joy," when the Divine Artificer created the universe. Or it may be that we shall arrive at infallible results in every department of inquiry by careful induction, but without those toilsome efforts which are necessary in the present state. Or, finally, it may be that our inquiries will depend upon all these as means of information. Be it as it may, we know that the desire of knowledge is an original affection in human nature; that it will prompt the invigorated understanding to unceasing inquiry, and that with mental powers which cannot err, and an immortality for their operation, the mind will arrive at a clear and comprehensive solution of all the difficult problems which now perplex us in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth.

But these UNSOLVED PROBLEMS are not confined to the system of Nature; we find them also in the order of PROVIDENCE.

With respect to the administration of the affairs of the universe, we are justified by all we know of the Divine character, in exclaiming with the prophet, "Righteous and true, art Thou, O Lord, in all Thy ways!" This is true of the Divine government over the highest and the meanest creatures; it is equally true of its ways, and of its ends, in relation to the individual and to the race. But who that has observed the ways of God to man, but has often had occasion to exclaim with the Psalmist, "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; Thy judgments are a great deep!" In all parts of human history may be found mysteries of Providence, which probably are fully understood by no mind except the Divine. "He hath His way in the sea, and His path in the great waters." (Psalm lxxvii. 19.)

We meet with these mysteries in the fortunes of individuals. The general rule, no doubt, is that virtue is the

best for both worlds, but it happens, not unfrequently, that the opposite seems to be the rule for the present world. The worldly Dives "fares sumptuously every day," while Lazarus lies at his gate covered with sores, and feeding on the crumbs that fall from his table. The fool in the Gospel finds his granaries too small, while old Jacob has to send into a foreign country for corn. The Baptist is beheaded at the mandate of a courtesan, while Herod, her dupe, lives and dies in a palace. The great Apostle of the Gentiles is in bonds, while the wretch Nero sways the sceptre of a Despot over the Roman world.

We meet with these mysteries in the fortunes of distinct races of men. The unity of the human race, is one of the best established truths of Science. We are aware, however, that certain Anthropologists, so called, have denied it, and set themselves, like certain enemies of Missions, of near a century ago, in opposition to all the agencies employed by Christian charity for the elevation of the down-trodden races. A certain Ecclesiastic set the example, on considerations of policy as well as of time-honoured prejudices, when Carey and his fellow-labourers went forth to attempt the conversion of the Hindoos. He had nothing to say against the Mongolian type of skull. He did not hint anything to the prejudice of their sable complexion, but many dark forebodings he had, that the zeal of the Missionaries to overthrow the Hindu superstition would wind up with the overthrow of the British power in India. Well, the intelligent reader knows what has followed. The Bible has been translated into many of the dialects of India. Suttie has been abolished. Infanticide has been arrested in its horrid course. Caste has been violated. Brahmins have been converted. Mutinies have been put down—at Vellore, at Cawnpore, at Lucknow—and, instead of the overthrow of our Rule, no change has occurred, except that the East India Company, with its Board of Directors, has been supplanted by the Queen of England, as *the Empress of India*, and the British sway, over the whole


peninsula, even to the slopes of the Himalayas, is as potent as at the foot of the Grampian hills,—as potent as when Clive overthrew Scindiah at Arcot, and Sir Arthur Wellesley broke the Mahratta power at Assaye! But this reminds us of another class of enemies to all human progress, who have nothing to say against the spirit of improvement, except that it contemplates Utopian objects—a phrase much in use in the devil's vocabulary, for the extinction of whatever is peculiarly noble and good. These men are Ethnologists of the school of Camper, and their opposition to attempts at improvement among certain tribes, turns upon their facial angle not being of the orthodox measure. This angle, the reader will understand, like all other angles, is included between two lines,—one of which reaches from the orifice of the ear to the base of the nose, the other from the most advanced points of the upper jaw-bone, which their unfeeling philosophy pronounces to be, in some races, not the jaw-bone of an ass, indeed, but of an ape. Thus they tell us, that while the facial angle in the European race averages 80 deg., in the countenance of the Calmuck it is but 75 deg., in the head of a Negro it is only 70 deg., and that in the head of an Ape it varies from 64 deg. down to 60 deg., so that the Negro, in his facial angle more nearly approaching the Ape than the European, has no interest in God's covenant of grace for mankind. Here is an assertion and an inference. We deny the one, and if we did not, we should quarrel with the other. The assertion is not true. The facial angle in the Chimpanzee, instead of varying from 64 deg. down to 60 deg., measures only 35 deg.; and in the great Orang it is only 30 deg., as we learn from measurements actually made by Professor Owen; so that tried by this test, the Negro more nearly approaches the human type than that of the Ape tribes. Moreover, the facial angle is too much affected by the prominence of the jaws to afford any reliable information as to the capacity of the cranium. Besides, if the assertion were as true as the Gospel, we hold the inference to be as unphilosophical as it is anti-social and inhuman. It.

should be remembered by these men that there is a psychology of man as well as a craniology, and in proportion as mind rises above the most elaborate material organization, so does the psychological rise above the craniological as a test of humanity. As our great dramatist says of the Jew, "Has not a Jew," &c., so may we inquire as to the Hottentot and the Negro. Have not they understanding? Have not they memory? Have not they imagination? Have not they conscience and all the moral affections? Have not they the faculty of Abstraction—of Judgment, of Will, and of Speech? When a new theorem is proposed to you in mathematics, what do you do? You apply it in a particular case. When a new substance concerning which you are in doubt is taken to the laboratory, how do you proceed? Why, you apply a test. In this way have the agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society—in this way have the various Missionary Societies proceeded with the pleas urged in bar, of the birthright of the Negro and Hottentot. They have applied the magnet of Calvary, and the Negro, the Bushman, and the Caffre have yielded to its attraction, even as the great Redeemer gave the disciples reason to expect of the *human* kind, before He left this scene of ignominy and of anguish. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all *men* unto me."

It found the Bushman a kind of pariah of the Hottentot race, with a tongue, limited to a few guttural sounds, and incapable of expressing any but the most vulgar of ideas, and it has supplied him with a language, and trained his mind to all those noble types of thought which Divine inspiration supplies. It found him without a house, or even a hut, lodging at night in the earth, like some wild creature or reptile, and it has built him a habitation in which he may enjoy the comforts of Home. It found him a naked, half-starved savage wandering in the forest, but it has clothed him, and seated him at the feet of Jesus, where he drinks in those lessons of humanity which the religion of the Great Teacher alone supplies. It found him living on wild roots, the eggs of

ants, reptiles, and vermin, but it has not only supplied him with the wardrobe of a civilized being, but also spread before him a table such as no savage ever possessed. It found him covered all over with filth, unacquainted with the use of water either for the cleansing of his person or his meat, and as much afflicted with hydrophobia as a mad dog—the disease happily did not produce the same horrible results in the human as in the canine subject,—and it taught him his first lessons on the use of water in the symbol of baptism, after which, all the other uses followed under Christian culture, very much as a matter of course.

Not only have religion and comparative anatomy given their testimony in support of the unity of the human race, but physiology and history have testified to the same effect. But while we find identity as to the family, there exists great diversity in the social and political condition of the varieties of which it is composed. We find, for instance, a decided superiority in the mental and moral attainments of the Caucasian variety over all others. Although this variety does not include more than one-fourth of the whole race, history shows that nearly all the sciences which enlighten the race, and many of the arts which conduce so greatly to its comforts, have sprung from the Caucasian intellect. The difference will be still more apparent, if we contrast the present degraded state of the Negro race in their fatherland, with the more favoured condition of the main branches of the Anglo-Saxon family in Europe and America. Eighteen centuries ago, these two races were almost equally involved in the shades of barbarism. But what is the fact now? At the present day, we behold the Negro race pouring out water before the rising sun in the fatherland, or bound by the manacles of slavery in the various countries to which they have been carried by the man-stealer; while the Anglo-Saxons, of both hemispheres, delivered from their bloody superstition, are in the enjoyment of a larger measure of liberty than any other people; ever and anon adding some new province to the empire of civilization




—multiplying themselves with unprecedented rapidity—by their intelligent enterprise, enlarging the dominion of reason over inert matter—substituting on the largest scale the mechanical powers for human labour, and multiplying in all respects those prodigious resources which have already given to sixty or seventy millions of Anglo-Saxons a greater weight in the scale of nations than, probably, all other races combined.

We meet with these mysteries in the rise and decline of nations, but more especially in their rise. Take an illustration from two countries, which have at different periods played a most important part in human affairs. We allude to Rome and Britain. The first of these nations, sprung from three thousand thieves and vagabonds, who settled on the banks of the Tiber, seven or eight centuries before Christ, had become, at the date of the Christian era, the head of the ancient world, in dominion and in arms. The latter was, at that time, one of the smallest and most insignificant of the provinces that owned her imperial sway. But what changes have come upon these nations during this interval of ages! How Providence has exalted the one and debased the other! At this moment, the ruler of Rome depends for his sovereign power in the imperial city on the support of a foreign state, while Britain, with her forty colonies in all parts of the earth, keeps, as Rome was wont to do in the days of yore,—

“The world awake with lustre and with noise!”

Nor have these nations changed places with respect to political power alone. The change is still more remarkable with regard to their rank in the march of civilization. The last has become first, and the first last; the one has been taken, and the other left. One of the most beautiful literary anecdotes of which we have any knowledge is told of Cicero and Newton,—the two most illustrious representatives of the Roman and of the British stock. A gentleman entering into a friend's house in some part of Southern Africa, was conducted into a room where were two marble busts; one of the

Roman noble, the other of the philosophic Englishman. Upon his friend's entering the room, the gentleman advanced towards the library, took down a volume of Cicero's writings, and turning to the passage in which the celebrated Roman gives his testimony concerning the intractability of British slaves, meanwhile pointing to the bust of Tully, he said, "Come, hear what this man says of that man's countrymen." We have nothing to complain against the justice of the testimony. What we have to remark is, the amazing change which has occurred in the position and character of the British nation, and how strikingly this change contrasts with the change, equally great, but in an opposite direction, which the world now witnesses in the proud city of the Cæsars. The tables have been turned. Britons are now free, in body and in mind, but the Romans bow to a yoke of mental thralldom and political degradation. Alas! they are trodden under foot by an old priest, the *ne plus ultra* of humiliation. That Providence has given to the destiny of each of these nations its peculiar hue, will be admitted by all. Even Gibbon, seated among the ruins of the Capitol, could not refrain from acknowledging "the finger of God" in the destiny of Rome. Amid the scattered fragments of the times of the republic and of the empire, "the monuments of Romulus, the sculptured marbles of Aurelius, the busts of Cicero and Vigil, the statues of Cæsar and Augustus, Pompey's horses, and the trophies of Trajan," he confessed the hand of God. But though the agency of God is as apparent in the overthrow of one nation as in the exaltation of another, who will presume to assign the reason why the ancient empire is permitted to flounder on in the various stages of decline, while each incident in the history of the colony is so overruled as to make it, after a succession of ages, the most brilliant of all the stars in the political firmament? In the case of nations, as in that of individuals, the reasons of inequalities of fortune are in a great measure concealed from our view. There is, no doubt, a philosophy of Providence, as truly as there is a philosophy of Morals, but





man cannot advance beyond its elementary principles, in the present state; the perfect mastery of the subject is reserved until he shall be translated to the High-school of the Universe, where the great Teacher shall give him lessons in person, in the presence of those holy and mighty intelligences, who have performed so important a part in the development of the destinies, equally of individuals, of nations, and of races! Until then be it ours to hope that what we know not now, "we shall know hereafter!" Ours to sing with the poet—

"God is His own interpreter,  
And He will make it plain."

To ordinary minds, the course of Providence with respect to individuals and nations will often appear like some grand object seen through a foggy atmosphere. Nor is it much different with minds of the highest order. To them, to use the words of one of the most penetrating spirits of the last generation, "the whole hemisphere of contemplation appears inexpressibly strange and mysterious. It is cloud pursuing cloud, forest after forest, and Alps upon Alps." Inspired men, indeed, sometimes use similar language. Thus, Solomon says: "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing." Joshua says: "The secret things belong unto the Lord." David cries out: "Clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne." (Psalm xcvi. 2.) Nahum exclaims: "The Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." (i. 3.) And the Apostle Paul cries out, in the midst of his mysterious discourse on the purposes of God, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33.)

The existence of evil under the righteous and beneficent government of an Almighty Being, is a problem that has exercised the best of uninspired intellects in all ages. God has vouchsafed to man a revelation of His will, but that revelation, designed mainly to serve as a guide in the practical

affairs of life, offers no solution of the problem. The great redemption wrought for fallen man, though eminently adapted to limit the dominion of evil, casts no sufficient light on the mystery of its origin—a mystery plainly inexplicable in the present life. How delightful the consideration that there is another life; that beyond the grave we shall change our stand-point, and with that change have a more commanding view of the extent of the Divine government, and a clearer insight into all its intricacies. O, how transporting the thought, that to that stand-point we are being hurried onward by the lapse of this mortal life; that when we reach it, the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall teach us “all things!” Nor do we alone wish for this final revelation. The wise and the good of all ages have pined for a full view of things from this stand-point in the grand centre of the Divine empire. Goethe, who had circumnavigated the entire ocean of human literature, asked in his dying chamber for “more light;” Foster, in the midst of his gloomy speculations, pined for “the sunshine of the other world;” and the poor melancholic Cowper, whom we have just quoted, during his unhappy life, had no comfort except in the anticipation of the grand issue of things in the eternal state. Of the present order of Providence he sung—

“ Deep in unfathomable mines,  
Of never-failing skill,  
He treasures up His bright designs,  
And works His sovereign will.”

But of the grand issue in the Future his notes were much more cheering :—

“ His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower.”

Blessed be God! the grand clearing-up day will come by-and-by. By the aid of Revelation we see the golden sun-ray of morn gilding the mountains of the Eternal World!

The longer we look, the more we are struck with the splendours of that glorious land, until, at length, our raptures of delight are raised to the highest pitch by the announcement of the mighty Spirit in the Apocalypse, "There is no night" —no night of gloom and bewilderment *there*!

O glorious truth! We are destined to enjoy stronger powers of vision, and to use them in a clearer medium. As the infant cannot bear the burthen of the full-grown man, so humanity, in its present state, cannot perform the task of unravelling those intricacies which will be perfectly plain in a future state. That these mysteries should overpower us now is but the consequence of the limited development of our faculties. It is cheering, however, to know that brighter destinies await us. It happens with us, as with the young plant of the naturalist, which was reared in the centre of the millstone, while it did not fill the central cavity, it could not lift the mass; but no sooner did it fill the central space than it began gradually to lift up the huge mass, and as the naturalist, calculating on this, predicted that one day the millstone would be seen suspended on the trunk of the future tree, so Hope anticipates that, in a future state, the renovated powers of human nature will be able, under God, to bear the burthen of proof and elucidation with respect to those numerous mysteries which now so greatly perplex the cogitations of the human mind. "We now see through a glass darkly, but then face to face." Wonderful will be the disclosures then. "Then, we shall understand *how* the vast machinery of events and circumstances worked out the Divine purpose in reference to mankind at large, in a manner equally consistent with Infinite Wisdom and Goodness." Then, all the doubts and perplexities, which have teased us in the unfolding of our *own* providential history, will be chased away like the mists on the mountain side, by the sunbeam of a summer's day, and we shall say, with the most assured confidence in the Divine rectitude and love, "*He hath done all things well!*"

It happens unto us, poor children of the earth, that we are checkmated for the present, in our inquiries in every department, either by something occult in the nature of things, or by the gloom which overcasts their *modus operandi*. It is so with respect even to *revealed* Truth. In one aspect it is a Revelation, in another it is a series of Problems which our puny faculties are totally unable to grapple with.

The *doctrinal system* of the BIBLE abounds with mysteries which are impenetrable by human sagacity. "The fundamental truth of the Bible," as Robert Hall has well observed, "on which every other rests, is the doctrine of *uncaused* existence, without which creation would be an absurdity, because an impossibility." *Uncaused* existence is assumed as a fundamental truth in the Word of God, but who among finite creatures will presume to say that he can form any definite idea of *uncaused existence*, or of its correlative mystery—Creation out of nothing? In human affairs it has been justly observed, that out of nothing nothing comes, but in the Divine administration the maxim does not hold, for Jehovah in the beginning produced all things material and immaterial out of nothing. But what imagination can traverse the distance between nothing and something—between an infinite blank and the existing creation? We have another great mystery in the *Tri-personality* and *Unity* of the *Godhead*. All our experience of personality in created beings, shows the inseparability of personality and *unity*. But in the Godhead, which is the highest form of existence, we learn that the tri-personality in the Subsistences is combined with *Unity* in the Divine ESSENCE.

Nothing can be more explicit than the testimony of Inspiration concerning the UNITY of the ESSENCE and the plurality of Persons in the Divine Nature. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. If the Father be distinguished in the inspired oracles by the names, attributes, and forms of address which properly attach to personality, so are the Son and the Holy Ghost. They are connected in

the Baptismal formula, as also in the Apostolic benediction. But yet we learn from the Scriptures, that combined with this plurality in the Persons there is Unity in the ESSENCE of the GODHEAD. Our Lord says: "I and My Father are one." Paul declares, "There is no other God but one." And in the Old Testament, Jehovah thus summons the attention of His people to the DOCTRINE of the Divine Unity:—"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." Thus it appears, that in the Unity of the Divine Nature there exist three divine subsistences, each of which exercises all the attributes of personal agency: and yet these subsistences are not so many different Beings, Natures, or Essences, nor even so many different modes or developments of one and the same person. Now it is clear that unity cannot be predicated of the Godhead in the same sense as plurality. This would involve a contradiction, and could not therefore be matter of Truth. But how plurality of personality can consist with Unity of ESSENCE, is an inquiry that lies very far beyond the range of the loftiest human intellect. The analogies that have been resorted to, for the illustration of this subject, such as, Three qualities in one substance, Three functions performed by one Being, and so on, are perfectly useless.

The manifestation of the SON OF GOD *in human nature* is another of the mysteries, and indeed the "*great mystery of godliness.*" Here we behold the Creator wearing the form of the Creature: the Eternal associating himself with the fortunes of the birth of time: the Infinite becoming an element in the personality of a Being whose other component parts are as certainly limited as are the elements which compose the manhood of any individual of the race.

Dr. Wardlaw, on this subject, indeed, shows that the doctrine of the Incarnation is not more difficult to understand than that of the diffusive Omnipresence of the Deity. He asks, "Is there anything more incomprehensible in the idea of the one nature being associated with the other, the finite with the Infinite in that one person, than there is in the idea

of the Infinite God being present in any one limited portion of space? If we are asked, 'How can it be that the Infinite nature of God should be united in the same person with the finite nature of man?' we answer frankly and at once, we cannot tell. But we meet the question with another. We ask in return, 'How is it possible that the Deity should be present in every limited point of space?—should be present in the full exercise of all its infinite perfections, within the little area bounded by the walls of the room in which we are now met?' When a satisfactory answer has been found to the latter question, it will equally serve for the solution of the other. And the circumstance of incomprehensibility ought no more to be felt a sufficient ground for rejecting the one article of faith, than for rejecting the other."

Such is the difficulty which, to our narrow comprehension, equally besets the doctrine of the diffusive Omnipresence, and that of the Incarnation—"God manifest in the flesh."

Nor is the Incarnation the only mystery in the great Mediatorial Scheme. There is the *Atonement*, which, however clearly revealed as the ground of a sinner's acceptance, is but imperfectly understood in its relation to the Divine government, and the mode in which it operates, as the only means of salvation to sinners, consistently with the honour of the violated law. What sagacity can determine the particular provinces in which the Humanity and Deity of our Lord operated, and the measure of influence which attached to each, in the presentation of the great propitiatory sacrifice, through which "God may be just, and yet the justifier of those that believe in Jesus?" Take another illustration from the difficulty which the most sagacious minds have felt in the reconciling the *reality* of *spiritual influences* with the consciousness of freedom on the part of the moral agent. The dispensation of the influences of the Holy Spirit is not only a doctrine of the New Testament, but a *fact* in the experience of all good men, quite as well supported by evidence as the Newtonian doctrine of gravitation and attraction, the chemical doctrine

of elective affinities, or any other general law of Nature. It *rests on consciousness*. But while these influences are acting on the heart of the moral agent, the *consciousness of free agency* remains undisturbed. The facts, on either hand, are so well *attested*—in many cases, so clearly matter of *experience*—that it would be an outrage on all, even the most rigid principles of philosophising, to deny them.

These and many other questions await solution in another State. We have no doubt that they will be satisfactorily solved when they shall be investigated in the light of Immortality, and by those glorified powers with which we shall be invested in the heavenly world. For the present, we must hopefully wait, remembering the words of the apostle, “Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know, even as also we are known.”

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## XI.

### THE EMPLOYMENTS OF HEAVEN.

THE CONTEMPLATION AND ADORATION OF THE DIVINE BEING, AS  
HE IS MANIFESTED IN HIS WORKS.

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THE high gratification which the contemplation of God's works in Nature and in Grace will afford the good in a future State, may be in some degree inferred from the delight with which those works are viewed on earth. Their *variety*, their *vastness*, and their *perfection*, will supply an inexhaustible fund of interest.

Variety in the types of being is Heaven's grand rule. This fact challenges observation everywhere, whether on the green earth or in the azure sky. What varieties of beauty and of grandeur greet the observant eye in every province of Nature! You behold them in the moss-covered rock and the crystal stream; you behold them by sea and by land; you behold them in the flower-garden and in the open field; you behold them on the high mountain, with bluff above bluff, and knoll behind knoll, its lofty summit now glittering in the glorious sun-ray, now frowning in the cloud-shade, and anon enveloping itself in darkness impenetrable to all vision except that of the all-seeing Eye, until the sun pass again through the portals of the east, to shed fresh rays of beauty on the fleecy garb of Winter, or on the green mantle with which Summer adorns the landscape, or on the russet covering which Autumn casts over the fields and woods, or to stimulate efflorescent Spring to decorate herself in new forms of loveliness! But Nature is not more prolific in varieties of beauty than of being. In these heavens there are single stars,



double stars, and triple stars; quadruple stars, quintuple stars, and sextuple stars. Then just think of the varied forms of animated being which throng the earth. They meet the eye at every turn; they crowd the stagnant waters, they exist in the most desert regions of the globe. The classes are counted by thousands, and the species by tens of thousands. There are the beasts of the field, from the ant-eater up to the elephant! There are the denizens of the waters, from the animalcule to the minim, and from the minim to the whale! In the air there are the feathered tribes with their brilliant plumage, from the sun-bird which feeds on the nectar of flowers, to the eagle that lives upon prey! Above them all, there is man with twelve hundred millions of the common stock, so varied by peculiarities of race and by individual peculiarities, that probably not two units out of all these millions are exactly alike in all particulars. But let us pause and think of what varieties of being have now passed in review before us. Their number is incalculable. But far from having exhausted the subject, we have only glanced at one province of an empire of being and of thought, too extensive, probably, to have been crossed even by angelic pinion in all the ages of the past, and yet every part of it is radiant with the glories of its great Author. The happy spirits in the land of the Blessed, be you assured, take greater delight in the contemplation of God's works, in their amazing variety, than we do, and they have much greater facilities for observation.

Then, think again of God's works as to the mighty *masses* of being which they include. You discover masses of worlds, compared with which our sun and his complement of planets sink into insignificance—worlds, most of them, perhaps all of them, in motion; but so harmoniously do they sail on the bosom of the skies as to raise almost to matter of fact the Pythagorean notion of "the music of the spheres," which to the ancients was a mere poetic conception. Their motions seem to be regulated by principles analogous to those you

observe in our own system ; but their periods reduce those of the planets to utter insignificance, for the cycles of the double stars, performed not like that of our moon in a month, measure hundreds, thousands, to tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, and in one instance at least—that of the star *Lyra*—to more than a million of our years ! You see one stratum of worlds overlaying another, as you hold on in your ascending pathway into higher and yet higher regions of space, the romance of demonstrated science vieing with the loftiest flights of the imagination in the grandeur of its results. You learn that the globe on which you stand to make your observations is being drawn upwards in the track of the remotest of those orbs along with the sun and the other planets at a rate more than equal to that with which the earth whirls along in her annual orbit ! You learn that the heavens you gazed on last night, as apparently the heavens of the hour, were really the heavens of more than a century ago. You learn that the works of nature are so vast—the scale on which *Jehovah* has constructed the mechanism of the skies so immeasurably grand—that a ray of light which has been dashing along for three hundred thousand centuries at the rate of eleven or twelve millions of miles a minute, has in all probability passed over not more than an infinitesimal fraction of creation when it falls on the object-glass of your telescope. The Psalmist might well exclaim, even though the light of science, with which we are favoured, was unknown to him,—“ O, Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth ! Thou hast set Thy glory above the heavens. How great are Thy works ! ” These glorious objects wax larger and larger, and apparently more and more various in their forms of glory, as we ascend. Those happy beings, therefore, whose field of vision reaches outward from the great central world, will have the best view of God’s works, as they have also the best capacities for comprehending their amazing manifestations of power, wisdom, and goodness. If the Psalmist, then, was so enraptured with the contemplation of these minor works of the eternal King,

when viewed at so remote a distance from the head quarters of Creation, what may we suppose will be the raptures of delight with which they contemplate the nobler works from the high vantage-ground that they occupy on Mount Sion?

But variety and vastness are not the only features of God's works. There are also marks of perfection on the works of nature that you look for in vain in those of art. The noblest works of man are greatly inferior to the humblest works of God, which have so often anticipated the operations of inventive genius. Just examine the structure of a fly's leg, and you will find all the mechanism of the air-pump, which the little creatures had been working for nearly sixty centuries before that instrument of art was ever dreamt of either by Guericke or by Boyle. Look into the bee's cell, and you will find a practical solution of the problem of *maxima minima*, as mathematicians term it, which the tiny little insect had been supplying to human observation myriads of years before the discovery of Newton's fluxional calculus, or Maclaurin's famous application of it, was ever heard of, just as the wasp had practised the art of paper manufacture for forty centuries before the Chinese hit upon that invention, and for more than 5000 years prior to its introduction by the Arabs through northern Africa and old Spain into western Europe. In the perfection of instinct,—in all the forms of excellence, God's works rise above man's. To give another instance: just observe how those works rise in regular gradation above one another, from the minutest vital organization in a drop of ditch water, to the most glorious being in the court of the Eternal King. In this long great chain of existence, reaching, like Jacob's ladder, from Earth to Heaven, you can find no break; it is marvellously complete in all its parts. The chemical world joins the mineral, the mineral world joins the vegetable, the vegetable the animal, and the animal the intellectual, by mutual, almost imperceptible, gradations. But when you have reached the noblest being on the highest platform of being—the creature of the highest rank in the

great pyramid of created existences—you behold an immense chasm between him and the Eternal cause of all being, who dwells in the solitary grandeur of His own infinite perfectibility, ineffably exalted above all His works. Without a peer in the intelligent universe, the Eternal has to bow the Heavens to hold communion with the loftiest intelligence in the Spirit world.

We learn in the sacred Volume how a prophet was moved to the highest strains of Adoration in the contemplation of the works of God from the earthly stand-point: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out the heavens with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? . . . Behold, the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, He taketh up the isles as a very little thing. All nations before Him are as nothing, and are counted as less than nothing and vanity. . . . Have ye not known? have ye not heard from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. . . . Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, and bringeth out their host by number, and calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; none faileth. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard that the Lord is the everlasting God?" (Isaiah xl. 12—28.) Again, we hear the Levites, at a solemn fast connected with the rebuilding of Jerusalem after the return from Babylon, crying to the people: "Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever: and blessed be Thy glorious name, who art exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even

Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made Heaven, the HEAVEN of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and Thou preservest them all, and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee." (Nehemiah ix. 5, 6.) If the contemplation of God as the Author of all things, from this earthly stand-point, moved holy men of old thus to celebrate His perfections, what may be supposed to be the fervour with which He is adored by holy beings who stand before the THRONE?

But the works of Nature are not His noblest works. The perfections of the Deity may be traced on the theatre of Nature by His finger-marks, which are seen on all His works; but on the theatre of Redemption they may be traced in the lineaments of the Divine countenance, which are seen on all parts of it. On Earth, we are privileged to behold those lineaments in the Gospel mirror, and then Paul describes the sight as "the glory of the Lord." In Heaven, we shall behold the same lineaments, but more deeply and distinctly traced. On Earth, our knowledge of God, by aid of a revelation in mortal forms of speech, is like the light of the three first days of the Creation before the Sun was made the orb of day—it wants intensity. In Heaven, it will be compacted and concentrated when we are privileged to behold the Deity face to face, and enlarge our views of His character by converse with the angels in the language of the immortals there. In Heaven, we shall have powers of vision suited to the examination of all the threads of this cloth of gold! We shall be supplied with all the machinery needful to bring up in unlimited abundance the golden treasures of this inexhaustible mine! We shall have put into our hand the line and plummet with which we shall essay to sound to greater and yet greater depths this ocean of unfathomable perfectibility! Nor shall we be slow in using the means.

We shall want to learn somewhat of the scene that Heaven presented on the day of man's Apostacy;—how the sword of vengeance that day was unsheathed by Justice for the punish-

ment of the criminal, and how the bowels of Mercy were stirred in pity for the rescue of the miserable! How Justice frowned upon the *sin*; and how Mercy, moved with compassion, fixed her eye on the *misery*! The solemn silence of Heaven, when the Divine Wisdom suggested how the claims of Justice for punishment, and the yearnings of Mercy for compassion, might be reconciled by the transference of the punishment to the MEDIATOR, while satisfaction was placed to the credit of the *sinner*! We shall want to learn from Gabriel the wonderment and admiration with which the "morning stars" of the Creation looked upon the redeeming scheme as it went on in the course of development from the birth of the REDEEMER in Bethlehem to the agonies in Gethsemane; the deep interest with which they watched its course from the agonies there in the Garden to that sad, melancholy cry of Desertion on the Cross, which fell on their ears like the thunder-clap of doom; their transports on the occasion of the triumph of the third day; their high exultation when, at the Ascension, they heard a choir of their order chanting His coronation anthem before the gates of Heaven; and their overpowering raptures when they beheld Him—the second person in the Godhead—take his seat in His glorified humanity at the right hand of the Father, on "the new throne," which was then set up in Heaven!

REDEMPTION is the all-absorbing theme to every being in the Land of the Blessed. All other glories vanish before the glories of the Cross. The Apostle Peter represents the angels—with all the material splendours of Creation at their feet—as contemplating with transfixed attention that mystery of love which was enacted there: "into which things the angels desire to look." (1 Peter i. 12.) Nor is it at all wonderful that they take so lively an interest in this theme, for their vast powers of intellect find in it matters adapted to their loftiest aspirations, and conducive to their fullest development.

Every person knows that the subjects which a man studies

usually bear some affinity to the character of his mind; a grovelling mind will dwell on grovelling subjects—a lofty mind on lofty themes. The reader has sometimes known a narrow soul that could find enough of occupation in the contemplation of a pin's head—a leaden soul, that was always gravitating towards the centre; without buoyancy it could never be tempted, under any circumstances, to leave *terra firma*; narrow in the grasp of its faculties, it never attempted to comprehend Being in all its vastness and variety. Now, as there are minds of different moulds, so there are various kinds of subjects suited to corresponding types of mental character. It is with respect to minds and their various tastes, as it is with the habits of different kinds of animated beings. As there are some winged creatures—the butterfly, for instance—that flutter from flower to flower in the lower regions of the air, so there are some minds that find their most congenial element in the humblest order of subjects; and as there are others, like the eagle, which soar to the regions of the clouds, and, if they touch the earth, touch it only where its mountain peaks seem to penetrate into the skies, so there are minds that find their purest pleasure in the contemplation of the loftiest, and in the investigation of the deepest truths which God Almighty has revealed to fallen man. Now, the intellects of the angels are of the latter class, and they are the noblest specimens of the class to which they belong. In the early history of the material universe, their faculties were disciplined by a Divine Artificer; their first lessons were taken as they stood amid the sublime scenes of the material creation, the delighted witnesses of Jehovah's power. Each of them might adopt the language of Uriel, in Milton's magnificent poem:—

“I saw when at His word the formless mass,  
This world's material mould, came to a heap :  
Confusion heard His voice, and wild uproar  
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd ;

Till at His second bidding, darkness fled,  
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung ;  
Swift to their several quarters hasted then  
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire,  
And this ethereal quintessence of Heaven  
Flew upward, spirited with various forms."

In allusion to the joy inspired through all the angelic ranks by this marvellous manifestation of Divine power, wisdom, and goodness, one of the Old Testament poets says, in one of the finest passages of ancient Inspiration, "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." (Job xxxviii. 7.) But their mental exercises did not terminate here. These glorious beings, whose lofty intellects were first exercised in the contemplation of the scenes and processes of the original creation, were afterwards employed in the minutest observance of the course of Providence—closely observing the unfolding of the great scheme of Providential arrangements, equally in relation to the individual and the nation, to the atom, and to the world. And this study, which afforded intellectual exercise to their mighty faculties, had often called forth the loud expression of their devotion to Him who dwells in the midst of "the clouds and darkness," which environ the Eternal Throne—"They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." (Rev. iv. 8.)

But the most magnificent field for the exercise of an angel's powers, is found in connection with the stupendous manifestations of the economy of Grace. In the system of Nature, an angel has a limited theme for study; in the revelations of Grace, a theme which shall continue to expand with the contemplation of it for ever. Nature, indeed, is so vast, that an angel might roam over its wide fields for ages, finding new scenes, and discovering fresh beauties every hour; but the time at length would come when the subject would be entirely exhausted. Nature may be regarded as a huge



volume, in which the Divine Being has inscribed a vast, but still limited, number of truths for the mental enlightenment of His intelligent creatures. This earth, with its chemical, galvanic, metallurgic, geological, geographical, physiological, and cosmical relations, forms, so to speak, one chapter in the Volume; the planet Mercury forms another, and the Sun, with the other planets and their satellites, form so many more chapters. The solar system, then, may be regarded as forming one section in this wondrous Volume; the system of the nearest fixed star another, and so on, to the highest system in the firmament. Well, let us suppose an angel to turn, with his mighty intellect, to the examination of the various sections, and the study of the numerous successive chapters in this great Volume. It is not at all improbable that he would master all the natural truths that this world is adapted to convey, in as brief a period as Newton took to learn his alphabet; and then, turning to the other parts of our section of the vast whole, he would master them, probably, in less time than our great circumnavigator took to sail round the world. And so he may be supposed to proceed, mastering section after section, as he rises higher and higher in the firmament, until, after ages of occupation, he is seen on the outskirts of the universe, mastering the last truth Nature is adapted to convey. Now, if there were not other fields of knowledge besides those over which we have thus in imagination passed, for the exercise of an angel's powers, his last discovery on the confines of creation would be to him the beginning of sorrows. Left without other worlds, towards which he might direct his adventurous flight, and possessed of a soul larger than the universe, he, too, might weep, like Alexander, because no new theatre remained towards which his all-subduing powers might be directed. Thank God, there is another volume besides the book of Nature—a volume of smaller bulk, indeed, but of brighter discoveries than any which the volume of Nature contains. This Volume is filled with germinant truths, which proceed to fuller and fuller development in the experience of the believer

during the course of unending ages. In the study of the glorious revelation of God's grace in the Gospel, the angels realize, and more than realize, the boast of the proud Castilian, the ambassador to one of the Italian republics, soon after Old Spain had achieved the conquest of the New World. When the Spaniard was shown the treasures of St. Mark, at Venice, he groped into the casket, that he might find the bottom; whereupon he said, "In this do the treasures of my Master exceed those of your Master—that my Master's treasures have no bottom!" Now this was an empty boast—equally empty, whether uttered with respect to the treasures of the republic or of the monarchy, but it is literal truth when construed of "the unsearchable riches of Christ"—the inexhaustible treasures included in "these things." There are heights here, which no angelic thought was ever able to reach—depths which nothing else than the plummet of eternity can fathom—and a length and breadth which you could not measure, though the attempt were made on the swift wings of an archangel, and prolonged through myriads of ages!

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## XII.

### THE EMPLOYMENTS OF HEAVEN.

CONTEMPLATION OF THE CHARACTER OF JESUS, AS IT IS  
MANIFESTED IN HIS REDEEMING WORK.

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BUT the great work of Redemption invests another object in the Heavenly world with a special interest, and the inhabitants feel a peculiar pleasure

*In contemplating the character and celebrating the praises of Jesus.* The Apostle Paul not only desired for himself to be “with Christ,” but he represents the militant Church of all ages as coming to “Jesus, the Mediator of the new Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling.” What a congenial employment must this be in the Land of the Blessed! What a rich fund of blissful associations will the vision of Jesus awaken in the bosoms of the Redeemed!—the Incarnation of the Eternal Word!—the Crucifixion!—the Expiation of Sin!—the Triumph over Death and the Grave!—the Overthrow of Satan and his Legions!—the Ascension into Glory!—the Enfranchisement of a World of Slaves to Sin and Satan! and the Translation of “many sons” up into glory!

The sainted Richard Baxter, in his immortal work, “The Saints’ Everlasting Rest,” felt the attraction of this object, and very appropriately represented the contemplation of Jesus as a principal ingredient in Heavenly blessedness. Speaking of the Rest, he says:—“It was dear to CHRIST, but free to us. When Christ was to buy, silver and gold were nothing worth; prayers and tears could not suffice, nor anything below His blood; but when we come to buy, the price has fallen to just *nothing*; our buying is but receiving—we have it without

money and without price. . . . Oh! the everlasting admiration with which the saints must think of this freeness. What did the Lord see in me that He should judge me meet for such a State? That I, who was but a poor, diseased, despised wretch, should be clad in the brightness of this glory! That I, a silly, creeping, breathing worm, should be advanced to this high dignity! That I, who was but lately groaning, weeping, dying, should now be as full of joy as my heart can hold; yea, should be taken from the grave where I was putrifying, and from dust and darkness where I seemed forgotten, and here set before this throne! That I should be taken, with Mordecai, from captivity, to be set next unto the King; and with Daniel from the den, to be made ruler of princes and provinces; and with Saul from seeking asses, to be advanced to a kingdom! Oh! who can fathom unmeasurable Love? . . . Christian, believe this and think on it: thou shalt be eternally embraced in the arms of that Love which was from everlasting and will extend to everlasting; of that Love which brought the Son of God's love from Heaven to earth, from earth to the Cross, from the Cross to the grave, from the grave to glory; that Love which was weary, hungry, tempted, scorned, scourged buffeted, spit upon, crucified, pierced; which did fast, pray, teach, heal, weep, sweat, bleed, die; that Love will eternally embrace thee! When perfect created Love and most perfect uncreated Love meet together, oh, the blessed meeting! It will not be like Joseph and his brethren, who lay upon one another's necks weeping; it will break forth into a pure joy, and not such a mixture of joy and sorrow as their weeping argued; it will be loving and rejoicing, not loving and sorrowing; yet will it make Pharaoh's (Satan's) court to ring with the news that Joseph's brethren are come; that the saints are arrived safe at the bosom of Christ, out of the reach of HELL for ever. . . . Oh! blessed morning! thrice blessed morning! poor, humble, drooping soul, how would it fill thee with joy now if a voice from Heaven should tell thee of the love of God—of

the pardon of thy sins—and should assure thee of thy part in these joys! Oh! what will thy joys be when thy actual possession shall convince thee of thy title, and thou shalt be in Heaven before thou art well aware! when the angels shall bring thee to Christ, and when Christ shall, as it were, take thee by the hand, and lead thee into thy purchased possession, and bid thee welcome to His Rest, and present thee unspotted before His Father, and give thee thy place about His throne! Poor sinner, what sayest thou to such a day as this? Wilt thou not be almost ready to draw back and to say, ‘What I, Lord! I, the unworthy neglecter of Thy grace? I, the unworthy disesteemer of Thy blood and slighter of Thy love! Must I have this glory? Make me a hired servant, I am no more worthy to be called a son.’ But Love will have it so; therefore enter thou into His joy. And it is not thy joy only; it is a mutual joy as well as a mutual love. Is there such joy in Heaven at thy conversion, and will there be none at thy glorification? Will not the angels welcome thee thither and congratulate thy safe arrival? Yea; it is the joy of JESUS CHRIST: for now He hath the end of His undertaking, labour, suffering, dying, when we have our joys; when ‘He is glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe.’ We are His seed, and the fruit of His soul’s travail, which when He seeth, He will ‘be satisfied’ (Isa. liii. 10, 11). This is Christ’s harvest, when He shall reap the fruit of His labours; and when He seeth it was not in vain, it will not repent Him concerning His sufferings; but He will rejoice over the purchased inheritance, and His people will rejoice in Him.”

With what raptures of delight will the saints gaze upon the King in His beauty! How they will wonder and adore as they behold the matchless glories of His countenance, and recount His deeds of grace, in bringing to that blessed abode that vast multitude of ransomed beings who stand before His throne! What an illustrious embodiment are these ransomed ones of His deep thoughts of mercy towards

fallen man! Here we see David, an adulterer and murderer, whom He hath washed from his sins in His own blood! There we see a Manasseh, who made the streets of Jerusalem flow down with innocent blood, and him has He saved by His matchless grace! In one part of the throng we see a Mary Magdalene, out of whom He cast seven devils, and her did He save by His Almighty power; in another, we see Saul of Tarsus, the "blasphemer," the "persecutor," the "injurious," the "chief of sinners," whom He saved by the abundance of His grace to him-ward. But why do we instance particular individuals? There is not one, in "the innumerable multitude," for whom He did not, before his arrival there, provide the means by which he might wash his robes and make them "white in the blood of the Lamb!" No wonder that they are found constantly in the temple praising God! No wonder that angels, with their refined and enlarged sympathies, join the sons of earth to celebrate His deeds of grace in an immortal song: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!" No wonder that the song is so often repeated, for at every repetition their gratitude deepens, while their admiration of the adorable Redeemer rises higher and higher, world without end!

We might call the attention of the reader to the manifestation of the mutual goodwill of the redeemed towards each other, as one of the employments of Heaven, but we shall have occasion to do this in another part of the discussion.

### XIII.

## THE ENJOYMENTS IN THE LAND OF THE BLESSED.

QUESTIONS THAT START UP ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE SUBJECT.

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THE enjoyments of the BLESSED are the most delightful theme on which the mind of man can dwell, but a theme which is beset with the accumulated difficulties which the curious, the captious, and the doubting have thrown in the way.

1. A question has been mooted, for instance, as to *whether the soul retains its consciousness in the interval between death and the resurrection?* We are sorry to have to mention the eminent Dr. Whately as apparently doubting whether it retains its consciousness during this interval. In his "Peculiarities of the Christian Religion," he says, "As for the state of the soul in the interval between death and the general resurrection, the discussion is unnecessary, and perhaps unprofitable; had knowledge on this point been expedient for us, it would, doubtless, have been clearly revealed; as it is, we are lost in conjecture. For aught we know, the soul may remain combined with a portion of matter less than a ten thousandth part of the minutest particle that was ever perceived by our senses, since 'great' and 'small' are only relative. All we can be sure of is, that if the soul be wholly disengaged from matter, and yet shall enjoy consciousness and activity, it must be in some quite different manner from that in which we now enjoy them; if, on the other hand, the soul remains inert and unconscious (as it does with respect to the seeing faculty, for instance, when the eyes are closed or blinded) till its reunion with matter, the moment of our sinking into this state of

unconsciousness, will appear to us to be instantly succeeded by that of our awaking from it, even though twenty centuries may have intervened; of which any one may convince himself by a few moments' reflection." (P. 92.)

The Doctor, in this statement, plainly assumes that the consciousness of the soul during this interval is not matter of Divine revelation. With all deference to so respectable an authority, we think it is. Unless the soul retains its consciousness after death, what could be the meaning of our Lord's words to the penitent thief, "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise?" (Luke xxiii. 43.) What the import of the dying prayer of Stephen—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit?" (Acts vii. 59.) What the import of our Lord's parable respecting Dives and Lazarus—"And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom?" &c. (Luke xvi. 22, 23.) Unless we are to suppose the continuity of the soul's consciousness during this interval, we again ask what could be the meaning of Paul's "desire to *depart*," as something preferable to continued enjoyment of Christ in this mortal state? What the meaning of those remarkable words to the Corinthians—"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are *at home in the body*, we are *absent from the Lord*?" (2 Cor. ii. 5, 6.) It is of no use to try to evade the force of these questions by some wiredrawn or hair-splitting distinction between time absolute and time relative, for the common sense of mankind will always answer, that if such a distinction is to be admitted, the words of inspiration, instead of being adapted to the popular mind of humanity for its instruction, are, by their non-natural construction, rather adapted to lead it astray. Besides, the answer does not, far-fetched as it is, apply to the case of the penitent thief: "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise," for we happen to know that our Lord *that day* yielded up His spirit and went



into Paradise, and the promise required that the penitent man should be *with* Him. Then, again, take the words of the apostle (ver. 8), "We are willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord," words which Dr. Campbell makes still stronger by his rendering them thus: "Those who dwell in the body are at a distance from the Lord; those who have travelled out of the body are those who reside, or are present with the Lord." The apostle is consistent with himself and the popular view throughout. Hence, in the passage to the Philippians, the commencement of his presence with the Lord is represented, *not* as coinciding with *his return* to the body at the resurrection, but with *his leaving* it at death. How does Dr. Whately's distinction between absolute and relative time apply to this? And then as to the *gain by death* which the apostle speaks of. It was precisely because Christ was his life—the real import and substance of his existence as a Christian, in the present world—that he could speak of death as gain; but this gain must refer to some higher and more *intimate enjoyment* of Christ in the state of the dead, or the apostle's language is wholly nugatory. From all these passages we draw the inference that the day of the unbeliever's death is the day of his admission into the presence of the Lord.

2. Another question has been raised as to *whether the soul at death* goes to its final home in HEAVEN, or to some intermediate place? Some persons have advocated not only an intermediate state, but also an intermediate place. The scholastic divines, who were very much given to the discussion of occult subjects, and the drawing of fine distinctions, derived not a few of their dogmatic principles from their imaginations rather than their judgments. Now these men have given us five receptacles of the dead—viz., 1. Heaven; 2. Abraham's bosom, Paradise, *Limbus Patrum*; 3. *Limbus Infantum*; 4. *Purgatory*; 5. *Gehenna*, or *Hell*.

Gehenna, according to these authorities, is the place of the Devil and damned souls. The *Limbus Infantum* is the region

in which dwell unbaptized infants. Purgatory is the place to which adults are sent who are too good for Hell, yet not good enough for Heaven. The *Limbus Patrum*, also called Abraham's bosom, is the place to which, according to them, the saints were sent prior to the Ascension of our Lord, and HEAVEN proper was the place where the glories of the God-head were unveiled in the presence of the holy Angels.

These views are thought to have had their seeds among the Jews, and to have been originally suggested to them by their intercourse with the Pagan nations of antiquity. They were transferred in early times to the Christian Church, and are believed to have germinated in those hotbeds of superstition which were formed in the Romish Church during the middle ages. A doctrine first advanced by Tertullian, and maintained not only by the Catholics generally, but also by some Protestants, is that of an intermediate place, called the *Limbus Patrum*, situated on the edge of hell, in which the souls of the pious who died before the coming of Christ were supposed to have remained in a state of rest and hope, but not of absolute happiness, till our Lord's Ascension, when they were liberated, and accompanied Him to the true Heaven, where they were admitted to the beatific vision of God. This doctrine was strenuously supported by Dr. Horsley, ostensibly under countenance of 1 Peter iii. 18—20, Acts ii. 31, and Ephesians iv. 9, but really in opposition to the current teaching, as we think, of the inspired Volume: the learned Doctor gave the go-bye to all the passages most difficult to harmonize with his hypothesis.

Many divines in the Anglican Church are so far tinctured with the views of this great man, as to maintain that the saints now occupy an intermediate place between this Earth and the Final Heaven. Now, the passages already cited, all go to disprove this notion, since they all either expressly assert, or plainly imply, that the saints at death are admitted into the presence of their Lord, who, it will not be denied, is located in the Final Heaven. Thus, in 2 Cor. v. 6—8,

we find the apostle stating these two particulars, viz., the existence of the soul separate from the body after death, and its residence with the Lord in this state of separation. Dr. Wardlaw, on this passage, observes that our language has not terms exactly to express the original, in which there is an allusion to sojourning in a country, at a distance from home and friends, and quitting that country to settle at home; and the terms seem to us to convey, as strongly as it is possible for terms to do, the idea of *immediate transition*, migrating from the body and settling with the Lord. The only question is: Where is the Lord? And when we recollect that the question relates to Him, subsequently to His resurrection, there can be but one answer to it. He is "gone into HEAVEN, and is on the right hand of God." (1 Peter iii. 22.) The passage in Philippians (i. 23) is to the same effect. The hope of the inspired man was, that instantly upon his departure from the body, he would be admitted to the fellowship of his Lord. The same remarks apply to the case of Stephen, whose spirit could not be received by his Lord without his being *present where* his Lord was.

It is objected, indeed, to the promise made to the penitent thief, that "Paradise" and Heaven are not the same place. Indeed! What, then, is the foundation on which the objection rests? The Jews made a distinction. We answer that the question is not what the Jews believed, but what the Scriptures teach. And what do they teach? Why, we are told they teach that the place to which our Lord went, and where His companion in suffering was with Him, was not Heaven, for our Lord told Mary Magdalene not to touch Him, for He had not yet ascended to His Father. But what was it that was not to be touched? His body. Very well; His body, then, was what was in question; it had not ascended. But this plainly is nothing to the purpose; for the penitent thief is not believed to have been with our Lord's *body* in Paradise. Moreover, we find the apostle applying the word "Paradise"

to the "third Heaven." First, the apostle tells us that "he was caught up to the third Heaven," and afterward, in dwelling on the same circumstance, that "he was caught up into Paradise." But Paradise is the region to which our Lord went on the day of His crucifixion; he, therefore, who was with our Lord in *Paradise* was with Him in *Heaven*; that is, to be with Him in Paradise and in Heaven are the same thing. The Scriptures, therefore, do not teach a *Limbus Patrum*, either for the saints prior to our Lord's Ascension or since that event.

3. The question as to mutual recognition in a future state is full of interest to man as a social being, and must, we think, be answered in the affirmative. Every person must be aware from his own consciousness that there are not only aspirations in the human breast after immortal existence, but also yearnings after the fellowship of our kindred, our companions, and the illustrious dead of all ages and countries. The great martyr of philosophy among the Athenians is reported to have uttered such aspirations in the ears of his judges after they had condemned him to death. "But if, on the other hand, what is said be true—viz., that death is but a removal to those regions where the souls of the departed dwell, then that state must be more happy still, to have escaped from those who call themselves judges and to appear before such as are truly so, Minos, Rhadamanthus, Æacus, Triptolemus, and to meet with those who had lived with justice and probity! Can this change of abode be otherwise than great to you? What bounds can you set to the value of conversing with Orpheus and Musæus, and Homer and Hesiod? . . . What delight must it be to meet with Palæmedes and Ajax and others who have been betrayed by the iniquity of their judges! Then also should I experience the wisdom of that king of kings who led his vast troops to Troy, and the prudence of Ulysses and Sisyphus; nor should I then be condemned for prosecuting my inquiries on such subjects in the same way in which I have done here on earth." (Cicero, Tus. Dis., xli.)

We find the Muse of Byron, notwithstanding her incredulity on "the resurrection," pouring forth her aspirations for a reunion with friends and kindred after death. This feeling is beautifully, although hypothetically, expressed in the following lines :—

"Yet if, as holiest men have deem'd there be,  
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,  
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee,  
And sophist madly vain of dubious lore,  
How sweet it were, in concert to adore,  
With *those* who made our mortal labours light,  
To hear each voice we feared to hear no more,  
Behold each mighty shade reveal'd to sight,  
The Bactrian, Samian sage, and all who taught the right!"

*Childe Harold*, ii. 8.

The same aspirations are breathed out with stronger confidence and under a nobler inspiration by the Muse of Montgomery, in the "Mother's Lament" over the death of her infant daughter :—

"Sarah! my last, my youngest love,  
The crown of every other,  
Though thou art born in heaven above,  
I am thine only Mother,  
Nor will affection let me  
Believe thou canst forget me.  
Then—thou in heaven, and I on earth—  
May this one hope delight us,  
That thou wilt hail my second birth,  
When death shall *reunite* us,  
Where worlds no more can sever  
Parent and child for ever."

Thus does our common nature cling to the hope of reunion with our kindred and friends in a happier, in a brighter world. But it is obvious that the pleasure of reunion involves the idea of *mutual recognition*.

Happily, we are not left wholly to the utterances of natural Sensibility on this question. The intimations of the

inspired page presuppose, if they do not declare, the fact of mutual recognition. Thus, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the former is represented as crying out,—“Father Abraham,” which he could not have done without the recognition of the Patriarch. Moreover, the Patriarch is represented as saying, “Son, remember,” which he could not have done without the recognition of Dives as one of his own national stock, so that *mutual* recognition is not confined to “the land of the blessed.” Again, our Lord, speaking of the gathering of the redeemed families of the earth, to share in the felicity of the skies, says, “Many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven.” (Matt. viii. 11.) Here the joys of Heaven are set forth under the image of a feast, in which one of the sources of interest is that, not only are the guests known to each other, but they include the most illustrious names of the patriarchal times. That this is a just inference is obvious from the context:—“Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets. But He shall say, I tell you I know not whence you are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall *see* Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.” (Luke xiii. 26—28.) From another parable already quoted, we learn that to *see* Abraham is to know him; hence, unless we suppose that the *lost* have greater powers of cognition than the blessed, we are shut up to the doctrine of *mutual recognition*. We regard it, moreover, as a circumstance indicative of the same fact, that on the Mount of Transfiguration, MOSES and ELIAS were known to Peter, James, and John. For, unless we are to suppose that these three disciples had greater powers on the Mount than “the general assembly” of the redeemed will have in Heaven, we shall in our Final Home enjoy all the delights of mutual recognition. We also think the language

of the apostle, in reference to the recompense of a faithful minister, plainly implies that there will be mutual recognition among the saints in another world. "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy." (1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.) It would seem that the converts of a minister, or the saints who have been led by him on their way to Heaven, must know their spiritual teacher, and he know them, in order to his realizing in them, in any good sense, "the crown of his rejoicing." Finally, the apostle, in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, says:—"Now we see through a glass darkly, but then *face to face*; now I know in part, but then shall I *know* even as also I am *known*." (Chap. xiii. 12.) The apostle in this passage contrasts the imperfection of our present knowledge with the perfection of our knowledge in a future state. It seems, therefore, since we have some knowledge of one another in the present state, that the apostle's antithesis involves a much deeper and more perfect knowledge of each other in a higher state of being. This again involves the notion of *mutual recognition*. The objection that spirit is *invisible*, we think, proves nothing against this doctrine. It will be admitted by all Christians that, in every act of perception, it is not the bodily sense, but the mind, which perceives the outward object. If so, when the spirit is disembodied, it still has in itself the faculty for perception, to which spirit, with all its qualities, mental or moral, may be as manifest as material objects were when it used its organs of flesh and blood. Dr. Watts, in his Philosophical Essays, expresses the opinion that spirits separate from bodies have a more immediate perception of God the Infinite Spirit, and converse with each other with greater freedom than in their embodied state. "They become conscious of one another's thoughts and volitions by some unknown way that God has appointed; for as an embodied spirit is conscious of the motions of that animal to which it is united by the appointment of God, as it becomes

conscious of the motions of the other bodies around it by the organs of that particular animal, and as it is also conscious of the thoughts of other embodied spirits by the motions or voices of their several engines or animal bodies, so, doubtless, there is a way which God the Creator-Spirit has ordained, whereby created spirits, which are social beings, shall maintain society and friendly communion with other created spirits when they are in their native state separate from material engines. . . . The spirit being unemployed and unimpressed by the material world, its thoughts are perhaps more purely *intellectual*, or, at least, it has no new sensations, but its ideas are raised in another manner. . . . The departed soul appears alone in the purely intellectual or separate world, like a native there. It stands among innumerable millions of spirits, itself a kindred spirit, gains swift *acquaintance with them*, grows conscious of their ideas and actions in their own way and method, which God has not yet revealed to us in this life. . . . I might illustrate this by two similes, and especially apply them to the case of holy souls departing:—

“1. Suppose a torch enclosed in a cell of earth, in the midst of ten thousand, thousand torches, that shine at large in a spacious amphitheatre. While it is enclosed, its beams strike only on the walls of its own cell, and it has no communion with those without. But let this cell fall down at once, and the torch that moment has full communion with all those ten thousands. It shines as freely as they do, and receives and gives assistance to all of them, and joins to add glory to that illustrious place.

“2. Or suppose a man born and brought up in a dark prison, in the midst of a fair and populous city; he lives there in a close confinement. Perhaps he enjoys only the twinkling light of a lamp, with thick air and much ignorance; though he has some distant hints and reports of the surrounding city and its affairs, yet he sees and knows nothing *immediately* but what is done in his own prison, till in some happy minute the walls fall down; then he finds himself at once in a large and



populous town, encompassed with a thousand blessings. With surprise he beholds the King in all His glory, and holds converse with the sprightly inhabitants. He can speak their language, and finds his nature suited to their communion ; he breathes fresh air, stands in the open light, and exults in his own liberty. Such is a soul existing in the separate world of holy and happy souls and before a present God, when the prison walls of flesh fall to the ground."—*Essay vii.* 177—180.

But a truce to this kind of reasoning. Probably the most effective arguments on this question are of the kind once employed by Dr. Evans in reply to his wife. "Shall we know each other in Heaven?" said she. Whereupon the Doctor replied, "Of course we shall : unless we are greater fools in Heaven than we are on earth." This palpable sort of logic had the effect of satisfying the curiosity of good Mrs. Evans.

4. A fourth question has been raised as to whether there are degrees of glory in Heaven. We think that the Holy Scriptures do plainly answer the question in the affirmative. Heavenly glory is a part of the recompense of the just ; and, as the principles of virtue exist in the saints in different degrees of vigour, so the recompense will be in different degrees of glory. As the just have with different degrees of vigour devoted themselves to the cultivation of their talents and graces, so they will be rewarded with different degrees of glory. As they have with different degrees of vigilance watched over their own souls and those of others, availing themselves of opportunities of doing and getting good, so shall they be honoured with different degrees of glory in their final state, for "every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour." (1 Cor. iii. 8.) But Paul's epistles abound in the statement of future blessedness under this aspect. Thus, "there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars ; for one star differeth from another star in glory ; so also is the resurrection of the dead."

Again, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully." (2 Cor. ix. 6.) Daniel also conveys the same doctrine as to degrees of glory,—“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” (Daniel xii. 3.) Here the prophet speaks of two characters. They are both good, but the one has merely the wisdom which belongs to all virtue; the other, in addition to this, has the wisdom and vigilance necessary to the conversion of multitudes of sinners. Accordingly, the one in his destiny shines as “the brightness of the firmament,” while the other shines as “the stars for ever and ever.” The destiny of each is glorious, but that of the latter is *much more glorious*. As the stars are more glorious than the azure of the firmament, so shall one class of saints be more glorious in their destiny than others. And even of those who shall shine for ever as bright orbs in the spiritual firmament, some will emit a much greater splendour than others. Many of the expressions of Holy Writ are couched in words that imply different degrees of glory. Thus, “he that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a *prophet's* reward.” Among the angels there are beings of different degrees of perfectibility. Some are cherubim, others seraphim; some are thrones, some dominions, some principalities, and some powers. And among the damned there are sinners of various degrees of wretchedness. Some of those outcasts of Divine Justice are more deeply plunged in misery than the men of Sodom and Gomorrah; others are more deeply afflicted than those of Tyre and Sidon. The Scribes and the Pharisees, with all their fastings and washings and prayers, were, because of their hypocritical pretences, more fearfully denounced than the other sinners of the land by our Lord, as if reserved for some darker corner of perdition and the endurance of a deeper wretchedness. Now, these analogies speak the same truth as the more direct language of Scripture on the various degrees of glory. Reader, let us

strive for the whitest garments, for the richest robes of honour, for the brightest diadems of glory. "The more grace and holiness any saint hath here, the more he is prepared and fitted for glory; and the more any saint is *fitted* for glory, the more that saint shall at last be filled with glory. The greatest measures of grace and holiness do most enlarge the soul, and widen the soul, and capacitate the soul, to take in the greatest measures of glory; and, therefore, the more grace the more glory, the more holiness the more happiness, a saint shall have at last."

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#### XIV.

### THE ENJOYMENTS IN THE LAND OF THE BLESSED.

#### THE SOURCES OF HEAVENLY ENJOYMENT.

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THE enjoyments which await the good in another world are as various as the powers of human nature. The Psalmist, meditating on this theme, cried out—"In Thy presence is fulness of joy!"

In the Heavenly world there will be the joy arising from *new discoveries* of Truth. Heaven itself, with all its varied glories, will be to the believer one grand discovery. A veil at present overhangs its magnificent scenery, as the rolling clouds conceal the peak of Teneriffe; but death will pour the light of vision on Mount Sion, and make all its glories manifest to the ransomed spirit. As from the summit of the Andes the traveller has his best view of the extent of the New World, so from this high mountain-peak the soul will command a wider view than from all the other great heights of the universe put together. It will learn more there in the twinkling of an eye than it could have discovered in a pilgrimage across all the rest of the Divine dominions. The believer will look with new eyes on the mysteries of Providence, now cleared up for ever. He will look with penetrating gaze on the wonders of redemption. He will comprehend with mightier grasp the great mysteries of future existence. The contemplation of Heaven as a land of discovery has often been a pleasing exercise to superior minds. John Foster, the great essayist, was a striking example of this. In a letter to Mrs. Stoakes, he says:—"The nearer I approach by advancing age to the grand experiment, the more

inquisitive—I might almost say restlessly inquisitive—I become respecting that other scene and state of our existence.” After the death of any friend, he always seemed impatient to be made acquainted with the secrets of the invisible world. On one occasion of this kind, rather more than a twelvemonth before his own decease, he exclaimed—“They don’t come back to tell us.” and then, after a short silence, emphatically striking his hand on the table, he added, with a look of intense seriousness, “But we shall know *some time*—we shall know *some time*.” Yes. Foster *now* knows the great secret. Heaven is the region of discovery. *There* the rolling clouds of ignorance are chased away from our mental sky, and the soul basks in the clear sunshine of Immortal Truth! There will be the joys of an intellect in the full use of all its resources; the pleasures of reason, developed to an extent of which we had no conception in our earthly state. Pleasures of sight and sound enter largely into heavenly enjoyment; but the pleasures resulting from the exercise of reason, purged from all the errors which attend its exercise in the present state, will far transcend all those pleasures of which even glorified senses shall be the inlet to the mind. Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face. O, what a delightful anticipation!—the anticipation that we, who now know truth in broken fragments only, shall be conversant with it as it exists in the perfect system of knowledge;—that we whose souls are clogged in their ascent towards the nobler forms of truth by bodies which have no sympathy with our noblest aspirations, shall, in a future state, be ever on the wing of inquiry into the wonders of Nature, Providence, and Grace, and shall be able to protract our flight through ages of industrious investigation, without flagging or even the faintest sense of weariness! How often, in religious experience, do the feelings of the moment derive their peculiar hues from a review of the past, or the anticipation of the future! Memory and anticipations enter largely into religious enjoyments here on earth; in Heaven they will be still more largely cherished

by the glorified spirit. What stores of delight must Abel, for instance, derive from his reminiscences of the past! He remembers his farewell to earth and all its associations, the last pensive view that he took of its scenery, as he slipped from the hands of the fratricide Cain into the triumphant car, in which he was escorted by a convoy of angels to the palace of the great King; the wonder with which he glanced at the myriads of worlds he passed on his way—reposing, as it were, on the bosom of æther—like so many floating islands, until, at length, the outworks of the great metropolis stood out in full view; the solemn awe with which for the first time he gazed on the Eternal Throne, and Him that sitteth thereon, surrounded by all the hierarchies of the skies; the raptures of grateful feeling with which he raised his solitary song as the ransomed child of earth, while the innumerable company of angels listened with mute astonishment to a solo celebrative of an economy which had been so recently announced in Eden; the profound interest with which, after the lapse of centuries and centuries, he welcomed one and another of the common family to the raptures of Paradise, until, at length, they became a great multitude. And, if the reminiscences of the finite past supply such pleasures to the glorified spirit, with what raptures of anticipation must it contemplate the boundless future! with what transports of delight the imagination plunges into an ocean of felicity that knows no bounds! But abortive are its best efforts to master the mensuration of boundless bliss, and the arithmetic of pleasures which shall go on multiplying themselves with increasing intensity for ever.

There will be the joy arising from *celestial harmonies*. Some great men have been eloquent in the praise of earthly harmonies. Milton speaks of them as “dulcet notes of linked sweetness long drawn out.” Then the ancients had the Pythagorean notion of the music of the spheres. It was certainly a grand conception, a glorious thought, that the motions of the heavenly bodies are regulated with such tact

and precision, as to make music under the immediate eye of the Divine Ruler, and to send the echoes down to mortals in this vale of woe. But, if such be the notes which the ear of Fancy catches from the mechanism of the *second* heavens, what may be supposed to be the harmonies which proceed from the well-regulated affections of the Redeemed and all the myriads of the angelic orders in the *third* heavens—in the Heaven of heavens? On Earth are seen the moral affections of humanity, belching forth the most dreadful discords; but holiness in Heaven is those same moral affections, so divinely regulated as to warble forth the sweetest harmonies ear ever heard throughout the whole glorified Creation. O what melody! what power and majesty are combined in the music of the skies!

Just try to imagine the ecstatic feelings with which one of the ransomed spirits of the Adamic race shall hear the Psalmody of the angelic orders: his enraptured feelings, when he shall listen to archangels, and powers, and thrones, and dominions—cherubim and seraphim, and the whole angelic throng, all the nobler order of celestial minstrels, while they sing—"Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts." With what ecstasy will he join patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, and martyrs, to chant their solemn anthem—"Praise, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever." O happy beings! clothed in white robes, and with palms in their hands, who are permitted to stand before God's Throne and utter their strains of Adoration and Gratitude in the Heavenly Temple for ever. Then will the whole concave of the skies reverberate with melodious transports, which shall reduce the poetic conception of the Music of the spheres to "nothing and less than nothing."

There will be the joy springing from *intercourse with the noblest and best* of all God's creatures. Man is constituted with the social affections which impel him to seek intercourse with kindred spirits. To a being so constituted, permanent

solitude would be unmitigated misery. You might place such a being in the midst of the most beautiful scenes—you might throw around him the grandest objects of contemplation, and light up every object and every scene with celestial splendours; but if he were destined to look upon it in everlasting solitude, it would be to him no better than a dreary desolation. There are two kinds of solitude, insulation of place and isolation of spirit. In the case supposed, they are both combined. And constituted as man now is, he would feel a dreadful void, and utter his complaint in some such words as Cowper has put into the mouth of Alexander Selkirk on the desolate isle :—

“O Solitude! where are the charms  
That sages have seen in thy face?  
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,  
Than reign in this horrible place.  
I am out of humanity's reach,  
I must finish my journey alone,  
Never hear the sweet music of speech,  
I start at the sound of my own.

\* \* \* \* \*

Society, friendship, and love,  
Divinely bestowed upon man,  
Oh! had I the wings of a dove,  
How soon would I taste you again!”

Heaven be praised, the land of the Blessed is no region of solitude. It is invested with social charms, which give it a pre-eminence over all the worlds that God has made. Suppose now, that you might, if you chose so to determine, be privileged to dwell in a select company of the wisest and most lovely beings on earth, to hear Eloquence utter words of power, of wisdom, and of majesty. Or more, suppose it your privilege to mingle in the society of the most profound and holy of all the angelic orders—Gabriel and his hosts, for instance—to enjoy their converse, and such manifestations of sympathy as angels can give forth, what an enviable position



would that be! what raptures would its associations enkindle in your hearts! Or suppose, again, you might enjoy both combined, how vastly ennobling would that be! O, transporting thought! This hypothetical case shall be realised, in fact, by all the saints. They shall sit down with all the great master spirits of the Universe "in the Kingdom of Heaven." They shall join Moses, the Jewish lawgiver; and Aaron, the High Priest; Isaiah, the Hebrew seer, and David, the sweet minstrel of Israel! They shall join Enoch and Elijah, who were carried to the skies in their chariots of fire; they shall join the Baptist, who came in the spirit and power of Elias; they shall join the apostles and the martyrs of the Truth; and others whom no man can number of God's ransomed ones.

O, what a glorious company! *Here*, I behold ministers of the Cross who have turned "many to righteousness;" *there*, the heroic band of martyrs who sealed their profession of the Gospel with their blood. *Here*, I see angels who excel in strength; *there*, the children of sorrow who "came out of great tribulation." *Here*, I see spirits, many of whom lived under the twilight of the patriarchal economy; *there*, spirits trained up under the noontide splendour of the Christian Revelation. *Here*, I behold the great multitude of the redeemed whom "no man can number;" *there*, "the innumerable company of angels." What variety of race! what diversity of endowment! what variety of lustre! But yet they are one family. Our pious kindred whom we most loved on earth, mingle in that congregation: our pious friends, whose memory we shall cherish as long as life shall last, all belong to that immortal fellowship.

"Oh, when the mother meets on high,  
The babe she lost in infancy,  
Hath she not then for pains and fears,  
The day of woe, the watchful night,  
For all her sorrows, all her tears,  
An overpayment of delight?"

One of the most interesting records of the joys of reunion, is that in the case of Jacob and Joseph. After twenty years of mournful separation, the old patriarch kissed his recovered son, and leaning on his neck, exclaimed, "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, for I know thou art yet alive." At length Jacob was taken away to another world. Joseph mourned deeply the loss of his beloved father for four-and-fifty years. But as he had sent the means to bring his father down into Egypt to enjoy the abundance of the land, so the great Redeemer sent down his chariot to bring Joseph to the land of the blessed, where he should enjoy in rich abundance all the elements of a blessedness that endureth for ever. O, happy change from an earthly court to the palace of the King immortal!

Between them and us at present, there is a vast chasm; but, thank God! it is not like "the gulph" in the parable, *impassable*. Every day it is crossed by scores, hundreds, and thousands of the family on their passage to the Father's House; and at the appointed hour, the ministers in waiting will be despatched to conduct you thither! And then, as you have often sung—

"O, what a glorious company,  
When saints and angels meet!"

But let it never be forgotten that the chief object of interest in the heavenly society will be our Lord Himself. In the style of the Old Testament, Abraham was "gathered to his people." Ishmael was also "gathered unto his people." Isaac was "gathered unto his people." Jacob was "gathered unto his people." Joshua and the men of his generation were "gathered to their fathers." But under the Gospel dispensation, the departed go to Jesus. "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord." To be "absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." Paul had a "desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." Delightful it will be to meet a

father, a mother, a brother, a sister, or a child in Heaven; but the chief joy will be felt in beholding Jesus on His Throne! This was the reunion on which the apostles dwelt with such inexpressible delight. "We shall see Him as He is!" So it has been with the saints in all ages. "Unto them that believe," He has always been "precious." But He will be more precious to them when they are at Home than He had ever been felt to be in the wilderness. He will there charm away the sigh for ever from every heart! He will wipe the tear from every eye! And He will lead them to fountains of living water, which shall flow onward and onward for ever! There will be the joy arising from a *survey of the most stupendous and most glorious of the works of God.*

What beautiful sights will greet the astonished eye in that land of beauty! And how all our other faculties will be gratified in contemplating the works of Jehovah! The field has beautiful sights for the eye to gaze upon, but the garden of flowers is much more charming, because the most beautiful objects in the field are there collected together and improved by culture; but in Heaven we shall have more beautiful sights still; for *there* shall flourish representative forms of whatever is most beautiful in all parts of the universe, and shine forth with a brilliancy, there in the light of Jehovah's immediate presence, unknown in the provinces from which they were transplanted. The beauty—both physical and moral—of things on earth, depends much on the LIGHT in which they are viewed; on the medium through which they are seen. What think you, then, will be the exquisiteness of heavenly scenes when looked upon by glorified eyes, and made visible by the reflected splendour of Jehovah's presence?—the magnificence of scenes when the glory of the Lord shall be the medium of vision? It is so ordered on earth that places most rich in beautiful sights are poorest in musical sounds. Birds of most beautiful plumage are seldom birds of sweetest song. So it is in the tropical regions; but Heaven is an exception to

the rule. The mind and the heart, which struggle against each other on earth, are seen in perfect concert of exercise there; sweet harmony sways all thoughts and all feelings. The combination of every interest is exact. What unanimity in the *choir*! What concord in the *chorus*! "Theirs," to use the magnificent hyperbole of Winter Hamilton, "is a strain of praise and thanksgiving beyond power of voice to utter, or of harp to resound." But let us take care that our hopes do not cleave, exclusively or *mainly*, to those pleasures of sight and of sound, as if they formed the very essence of celestial enjoyment. Heaven is *vastly better* than the first flower-garden in the universe; something inconceivably greater than a grand concert in which angels and ransomed mortals form the choir. The Heaven of heavens commands a view of whatever is most sublime in all the works of God—a view in comparison of which Saturn's ring or Jupiter's belt may be as insignificant as an india-rubber ball, when compared with the grandest objects in the Solar System. If so, O, what will it be to be there!

There will be the *joy springing from perpetual devotion*, performed under the immediate observation of Jehovah. How delightful, even on earth, to a devout spirit, are the exercises of devotion! How amiable to David were the tabernacles of the Lord of Hosts! How he desired to enter the courts of the Lord! How his heart cried out for the living God! How he sung of the blessedness of those who dwell in God's house, that they may be always praising Him! "One day," says he, "in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." "For the Lord God is a sun and shield." "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God! My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm lxxxiv.; Psalm xlii.) In a future world, the redeemed will constantly worship God in the upper sanctuary. How joy and reverence must

have mingled in the heart of the Jewish high priest as often as he was permitted to enter into the Holiest of All—into the immediate presence of the Eternal King! But with how much more of reverence and rapture will the beatified saints stand worshipping in the Divine presence, for ever contemplating God without weariness; for ever singing their hallelujahs without diminution of rapture! There is weariness connected even with our devotions on earth, but there will be none in Heaven. It were as possible for the moon to grow weary of reflecting the sun-ray, or the planets of yielding to the power of solar attraction, or the magnet of turning towards the North, as for a beatified soul to grow weary of contemplating and adoring the Eternal Fount of All Good. Hence we learn that the redeemed praise God without weariness in the upper courts for ever!

*Joy of personal glorification.* If it be joyful to look *objectively* on the glorified creation, what must be the enraptured feeling with which our *consciousness* awakes to the fact that we ourselves are glorified? “As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness.” At death, we shall have our spiritual glorification in the perfecting of our moral and intellectual faculties. At the resurrection, we shall have our personal glorification in the moulding of our material humanity into the image of our adorable Lord. How this assurance occupies the attention of the apostle! “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” “We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” O, the change which shall then pass over our physical organs!

But, if such transports of delight may be expected from our bodily glorification, what shall be said of the raptures inspired by our spiritual glorification? In the sanctuaries of earth our purest delights, after the inner man, are in the contemplation of the beauties of holiness, as they are dimly seen through the

haze of this sin-blighted world. These beauties, though environed with terrors and "guarded by flames," are chief objects of attraction to the souls of the devout, even in these lower sanctuaries. But if so, with what ineffable delight shall the glorified spirit contemplate the beauties of holiness, as they are reflected from the Divine countenance and transmitted to the eye through the pure transparency of that inner sanctuary which is emphatically the *Sanctum Sanctorum* of the universe? What raptures of delight shall the object of our adoration then breathe into our souls as we stand perpetually before Him praising Him in His temple? And with what throbbing ecstasies shall we join the innumerable multitude of the cherubim and seraphim to extol His perfections, as illustrated in Creation, Providence, and Grace? In a word, the fulness of joy shall be diffused through all the ramifications of our moral and intellectual being in endless variety of enjoyment. We believe this phrase, "fulness of joy," and the parallel phrase, "pleasures for evermore," were intended by the Royal minstrel not only to indicate the duration, but the variety, of the pleasures of the Heavenly state. Pleasures of contemplation shall be heaped upon joys of intuition; pleasures of angelic communion shall be superadded to the joys of fellowship with the ransomed members of our common family. And, best of all, the pleasures of communion with the Eternal Father of All shall be crowned with the joyous vision of the glorified Son, our exalted Redeemer. *Here* we have enjoyment by the drop; *there* we shall drink of the living fountain. *Now* enjoyment is distilled upon our spirits like the dew of Hermon; *then* we shall plunge into the boundless ocean of celestial delights!

Finally, there will be the joy of being *placed beyond the possibility of evil, and within reach of higher and higher good for ever*. It was "fulness of joy" of which the minstrel of Judah sung. On earth, our spirits are too large for such enjoyments as it affords. In the course of one revolution of the

sun, we experience nearly all its varieties of enjoyment and all their intensity; but in Heaven such will be the variety, and such the increasing intensity, that its joys will supply our enlarged spirits with a full round of enjoyment for ever. O, what a state must that be in which the soul has no wish that is not constantly gratified—no susceptibility of enjoyment that is not fully realized in that state in which there is “fulness of joy!”

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## XV.

### THE ENJOYMENTS IN THE LAND OF THE BLESSED.

#### THE PERFECTION OF HEAVENLY ENJOYMENT.

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THE plenitude and variety of enjoyments in the Heavenly world are such that the saints of the most opposite temperaments, and in the most varied circumstances, find in it their spirits' home.

Handel and Winter Hamilton delighted to think of Heaven as a region of the most exquisite harmony. Dr. Barrow loved to contemplate it as a state of perfect knowledge. Baxter describes it as a 'place of rest. Bernoulli loved to think of it as a land of discovery. Foster delighted to contemplate it as the favoured spot where all the mysteries of Providence are cleared up. Charles Wesley sung of it as the place where are scenes of immortal triumph. Humboldt delighted to contemplate it as a world of glory, and Wilberforce as the place where perfect love prevails; and the illustrious John Howe, as a region in which all the elements of blessedness are combined in the most perfect harmony. Well, none of them have been disappointed; in each of these aspects, it has surpassed the loftiest expectations of them all. On the "ever-green shore" Winter Hamilton finds a land of sweetest song! And Handel, whose passion for music conducted him to Italy as the land of *harmony*, has found that land in HEAVEN—a land where no genius of discord ever penetrates the Temple of Harmony. What a contrast there must have been between the delight with which the King of England and the assembled nobility of the land witnessed the



performance of Handel's own "Messiah" in Westminster Abbey, and the transport with which that wonderful genius listened, at the same moment, to the "Messiah" of the celestial TEMPLE, performed by the innumerable company of angels and the whole family of the Redeemed, in the presence of the MESSIAH Himself, enthroned above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named in this world and in that which is to come! *There* Dr. Barrow realizes his expectations of a state of perfect knowledge, for he knows as he is known! *There* Wilberforce finds himself in a region where Love sways a universal sceptre, and has an undisputed dominion over the largest community of intelligent beings in the universe! *There* Bernoulli makes discoveries evermore, as the cycles of immortality roll on in their endless course, in comparison of which his discoveries in optics were as those of a child experimenting on soap bubbles! Baxter realizes there "the saints' everlasting rest." He is free from all the toils, the pains, and disquietudes of earth, and is for ever with the Lord. *There* Foster finds a region of clearest vision. O, what a change for that great but melancholic man! He now bounds from height to height on the everlasting hills of bliss, and, with every change of position, new objects of surpassing interest engage his attention. Birds of Paradise flutter around him on every side, and their sweet notes are wafted by every breeze; he traces the footprints of angels on every eminence; he listens to the loud hallelujahs of the redeemed in every grove; he finds no chaos of rocks as on the mountain-heights which it was his delight to climb on earth; no snowdrift—no unfathomable gorges into which he fears he will, by some false step, be plunged, and be lost to the universe for ever. "The former things have passed away," and from the high mountain-ranges of immortality, he looks down through the gates of death upon the course of Providence in relation to this region, in which he sojourned for so many years, and with what delight he finds that his mind, now all eye, penetrates, almost without effort, through the clouds and darkness

which here enveloped the Divine government, and made it to his observation an impenetrable mystery. To him there is fulfilled the promise which the great Redeemer made to Peter *here*—"What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter." Charles Wesley beholds all those insignia of glorious triumph, of which his Muse so often sung amid the sorrows of mortality :—

"Him eye to eye we there shall see,  
Our face like His shall shine.

\* \* \* \*

O, what a joyful meeting there,  
In robes of white arrayed,  
Palms in our hands we all shall bear,  
And crowns upon our head."

Humboldt, when the sun shone brilliantly into his death-chamber, said, "How grand these rays! they seem to beckon earth to Heaven." Well, Humboldt, if he died in the faith, has ascended beyond the source of the glorious sun-ray; he has been conducted by his swift-winged escort beyond the most distant orb of his own "Cosmos," and found that the world of his destiny is made glorious, not by the light of the sun, moon and stars, but by the glories of the Godhead! How the scenery around him *THERE* contrasts with all he had ever beheld in the pilgrim land he has left behind, which he knew better probably than any mortal ever had known it before! He who, on the banks of the Orinoco, was smitten with a feeling of despair, when looking on its dark waters, is filled with exulting joy as he views the crystal stream of the river of life flowing from its fountain beneath the eternal throne. He who on the Cordilleras—the lofty summit of the Andes—had found an unmitigated solitude under a frost-bound dominion, which no fire of human blood could long support, now stands on MOUNT SION in a position equally free from excessive cold and oppressive heat! O, marvellous exaltation! *there he stands on the Cordilleras of the skies, in the presence of the Universal Sovereign, and the innumerable company of Angels, and the*

*general Assembly of the Church of the First Born, and the spirits of just men made perfect! From that eminence he looks, and, far as immortal vision can reach, nothing is to be seen but an ocean of glory!*

And the mighty soul of the illustrious John Howe realizes, and more than realizes, all the glory of which he wrote with such penetrating insight and amazing grasp of thought in his "Blessedness of the Righteous." Standing in the presence of the Supreme Majesty of Heaven and Earth, and beholding His unveiled face, he regards the most sublime views of his immortal work as but the prattling of a child on a theme that shall supply ample scope for his glorified spirit through all eternity. Like the Queen of Sheba in the Court of Jerusalem, when gazing on the glory of Solomon, so he looks with rapturous amaze on a scene lit up by the glories of the Divine countenance, and exclaims at once of the glory of the Lord of Hosts and the immortal blessedness of the saints, "The one half had not been told me—the one half had not been told me!" It is not only the fruition of bliss: it is the eternal fruition of bliss that knows in its progression no limit, however distant, no end, however remote.

What did we say? **LIMIT**—a limit to the fruitions of the blessed! Why, if such a thing were announced to the redeemed in Heaven, it would unstring every harp, and silence every song. **AN END!** The very thought would invest the loveliest scene of Paradise with more than the gloom of Erebus. It would fall on the ear like harsh thunder, amid the most harmonious psalmody of the skies. It would send the chill of despair through the hearts of all God's ransomed ones. And, as Winter Hamilton says, with great force and beauty, "The vesture would seem to decay, while yet it was unimpaired. The amaranth would seem to sere amidst the brightest bloom. The twelve foundations would seem to shake long before they sunk away! Faint was the shriek of Sin—embodied by our own bard in hideous form, when she brought forth full-armed her monster son, and fled and cried out, 'Death'

and Hell! Back resounded 'Death.' Faint were those shrieks in comparison with the horror which the slightest suspicion of an end to heavenly blessedness would awake in these nations of the saved. But why dwell for a moment on their last look, their clinging hold, their dying groan, their annihilation! It is a lawless dream—alike impossible to be true, and impious to imagine!" Such is the mystery of future existence in the case of the saint. After all that revelation has communicated in relation to his destiny, "it doth not yet appear" what he shall be! But, dear reader, there are some who are not saints, who find in saintship only a subject for mockery. They also have their mystery of future existence. Revelation has communicated much concerning their destiny, but there are the same difficulties in the way of a perfect disclosure that we find in the case of the saints. "It doth not yet appear what ~~they~~ they shall be!" Their destiny, also, exceeds all the resources of mortal language to express. You shall group together whatever is most dreadful in your reminiscences of all the sad sights you ever saw—of all the horrid places you ever read or heard of, but "it doth not yet appear" ~~WHAT THE SINNER~~ shall be in the untold horrors of his everlasting prison-house. You shall, out of all the hideous monsters that ever brought infamy on the name of man, form one Colossus of crime and impiety, and yet "it doth not appear" what he shall be in all that is horrid and infamous! You shall extract one essence of misery from all that mankind have ever suffered, and think of this as the cup of his anguish for ever, yet "it doth not appear" what he shall be in all the unfathomable depths of his misery. Let your imagination, dear reader, after having exhausted all the elements of misery cognisable by the understanding in the facts of mortal experience, all the scenes of woe which memory has engraven on the chambers of Imagery, create new elements of wretchedness, and mingle them all in one dreadful cup. Let it combine them all in one most hideous sketch of his final destiny, and yet still it is true that "eye hath not seen, that ear hath

not heard, that it hath not entered even into the heart of man to conceive" the unmitigated horror of that "wrath to come," which the incorrigible impenitent shall be doomed to endure for ever!

Permit us, dear reader, to assist your lucubrations on this dark subject by a passage of tremendous force from the pen of Suso, one of the orthodox mystics, a writer of the fourteenth century. "Alas!" says he, "misery and pain, they must last for ever. O! eternity, what art thou? O! end without end! O! death, which is above every death, to die every hour, and yet not to be able ever to die! O! father and mother, and all whom we 'love.' May God be merciful unto you for evermore; for we shall see you no more to love you; we must be separated for ever! O! separation, everlasting separation, how painful art thou! O! the wringing of hands! O! sobbing, sighing, and weeping, unceasing howling and lamenting, and yet never to be pardoned! . . . Give us a millstone, say the damned, as large as the whole earth, and so wide in circumference as to touch the sky all around, and let a little bird come once in a hundred thousand years and pick off a small particle of the stone, not larger than the tenth of a grain of millet, and after another hundred thousand years let him come again, so that in ten hundred thousand years he would pick off as much as a grain of millet, we wretched sinners would desire nothing but that thus the stone might have an end, and thus our pains also; yet even that cannot be." Alas! what a destiny!

"Storms of angry fire shall roll,  
To blast the rebel worm;  
And beat upon his naked soul,  
In one eternal storm."

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## XVI.

### THE ENJOYMENTS IN THE LAND OF THE BLESSED.

#### GLIMPSES OF THE FINAL HOME CAUGHT BY THE EYES OF THE DYING.

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SUCH are our views on the FINAL HOME—such our views as to the Final State of the Redeemed. It was the prospect of this glorious destiny that supported the saints of patriarchal and prophetic times under all the griefs incident to this mortal life. It was this prospect that cheered the apostles and the early Christians in their conflict with the world in arms. In later times, its cheering influence was experienced by the Puritan in one of the darkest periods of British history. He contemplated “superior beings and eternal interests.” He aspired to catch a glimpse of the Divine countenance, “to gaze on the intolerable brightness,” and to commune with God “face to face.” He despised all “the accomplishments and all the dignities” of the world, because he was the heir of a house not made with hands, and of a crown of glory which should never fade away. “On the rich, and the eloquent, and the noble, he could afford to look with contempt; for he esteemed himself rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, and a priest by the imposition of a mightier hand.” Amid terrible scenes of persecution, he gazed on “the Beatific Vision.” Amid the revelry of his carousing contemporaries, his ear was charmed with celestial music. In a word, his affections were “set on things above,” and he endured as seeing Him who is the Great INVISIBLE. So it had been also with the sufferers

during the period of British Martyrology, which preceded the enlightened sway of Elizabeth. The four great pillars of the Reformation in England—Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, and Bradford—all derived great comfort and strength by their contemplations on "the recompense of the reward." It was especially so with Bradford. His thoughts while in prison are upon record, and fully justify what we have said. Read them, and they will show you. "O my soul," says he, "lift up thyself above thyself: fly away in the contemplation of heaven and heavenly things: make not thy further abode in this inferior region, where there is nothing but travail, and trials, and sorrow, and woe, and wretchedness, and sin, and trouble, and fear, and all-deceiving and destroying vanities. Bend all thine affections upward into the superior places where thy Redeemer liveth and reigneth, and where thy joys are laid up in the treasury of His merits, which shall be made thy merits, His perfection thy perfection, and His death thy life eternal, and His resurrection thy salvation. Esteem not the trifling pleasures of this life to be the way to this wealth, nor thy ignominious estate here to be any bar to prevent thee from the full use and joyful fruition of the glory there prepared for thee. I am assured that, though I want *here*, I have riches *there*: though I hunger *here*, I shall have fulness *there*: though I faint *here*, I shall be refreshed *there*: and though I be accounted *here* as a dead man, I shall *there* live in perfect glory. That is the city promised to the captives whom Christ shall make free: that is the kingdom assured to them whom Christ shall crown: *there* are the joys prepared for them that mourn: *there* is the light that never shall go out: *there* is the health that shall never be impaired: *there* is the glory that shall never be defaced: *there* is the life that shall taste no death: and *there* is the portion that passeth all the world's preferment. *There* is the world that never shall wax worse: *there* is every want supplied freely without money. *There* is no danger, but happiness, and honour, and singing, and praise, and thanksgiving unto the

Heavenly Jehovah. 'To Him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb!' that here was led to the slaughter, and now 'reigneth;' with whom I shall 'reign,' after I have run this comfortless race through this miserable earthly vale. The honour in this earth is baseness: the riches of this world is poverty: the fullness of this life is want: the joys of this world's kingdom are sorrow, and woe, and misery, and sadness, and grief. And yet the fool saith in his heart— 'There is no other heaven but this harmful, deceiving world's happiness: no other hell but this world's bitterness: no better comfort than this world's cares: no further help than this world's wealth.' Thus is man's wisdom made foolishness, and man's glory turned into shame, and man's power made of no force; and the faithful poor that are here despised, they are advanced, the sorrowful are comforted, and the cast-aways in this world are received to this blessed being, that cannot be expressed with the tongue of man, nor conceived with the heart of man. 'O that I had wings!' saith heavenly-hearted David, 'that I might fly away from this world's vanities, and possess heaven's happiness!' 'O that I were dissolved!' saith blessed Paul, 'that I might be with Christ.' O that I were in this place of such wished happiness, where I might rest from those worldly labours, and earthly miseries, and transitory vanities! But be not heavy, O my soul, though thou must yet wade under the burden of those earthly troubles; for these heavenly mysteries are not seen of carnal eyes, nor can be obtained by carnal means; but through troubles, and afflictions, and dangers, and persecutions, they must be achieved; and none that are God's elected shall be free from this world's hatred. For such difference is there between earth and heaven, and between earthly and heavenly things, that whoso delighteth in the first shall be deprived of the latter; for we cannot have this world's heaven 'and the heaven of heavens,' the heaven of saints and angels, and the cherubim and seraphim, where are all 'unspotted and all glorious, and all in



white robes' of sanctity, and where Christ the sacrificed Lamb is unto them 'All in All.' Oh! blessed are all they that are thus assured: blessed are the poor that shall have this heaven's riches: blessed are the base that shall be thus advanced: blessed are the low that shall be thus raised; and blessed are the world's despised that shall have this heaven's happiness: yea, happy is this wretched world's unhappy man, for he shall be happy! I will daily meditate of the greatness and majesty of this high heaven's blessed estate, where I shall one day bless my God with the company of His saints, and where I shall one day sit secure and free from the dangers and perils, and crosses and afflictions, that now do assail me on the right hand and on the left, within me and without me, and am never free from one calamity or another. But it is good for me to be here humbled, that I may be there advanced, where I wish speedily to come: it is good that I were in want here, that I might seek heavenly necessities: it is good that the world did discourage me, that I might fly to God that comforteth me: it is good that I am daily killed here, that I might live continually. Now, therefore, O my soul, stand up, fear not, faint not at this world's crosses, but give glory to this great God, praise this high and helping God, seek Him 'while it is day;' drive not off to pray to this God, notwithstanding any hope thou hast in mortal man, but reject not this gracious means, who in favour infinite, and mercy endless, moveth the hearts of men in this life to do good unto such as He seeth distressed. He can find out and afford infinite means to succour them that are His, and will not leave them forsaken in danger; for He even here giveth me His blessings as pledges of His never-failing love, that being visited in His mercy with timely comforts here, I may assure me of greater blessings in heaven, where they are prepared beyond all that I can ask or think. O, Lord God of Hosts, who is like unto Thee, 'who hast established Thy kingdom with truth and equity, with mercy and judgment?' 'Thou hast a mighty arm, strong in Thy hand, and high is Thy right

hand : ' he that trusteth in Thee, mercy embraceth him on every side.' O, blessed art thou, O my soul, if thou canst 'rejoice in the Lord.' He is thy father, he is thy helper : walk therefore in the light of His countenance, and be patient : wait in hope till these storms be past, and then shalt thou have that quiet rest that He hath prepared in heaven. ' Lord, increase my faith.' ' Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, even the Lord Jesus.' ' If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.' ' Set your affections on things above, and not on things which are on the earth.'

" That there is an everlasting life, none will deny but such as will deny God ; for if He is true and just (which He must needs be, or else He is not God), then can there not be but an eternal life. That He hath both spoken it and promised it, in Matt. xxv., Cor. xv., Heb. iv. xi. xii., 1 Pet. i., it plainly appeareth, and elsewhere, in very many places. So that to deny an everlasting life is to deny God ; to deny Christ and all that ever He did ; also to deny all piety and religion ; to condemn as foolishness all good men, martyrs, confessors, evangelists, prophets, patriarchs. Finally, the denial of eternal life is nothing else but a denial of the immortality of the soul, and so a plain making of man nothing better than beasts. If it be so, ' let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' Lord, preserve us from this Sadducean and Epicurean impiety, and grant us for Thy mercy's sake, dear God, that we may be assuredly persuaded that there is indeed an eternal life and bliss with Thee for them that put their trust in Thee ; amongst whom account me for Thy mercy's sake. Again, this eternal life, and the place appointed for them that be Thy servants, all men do grant to be with Thee : albeit they do not think that because Thou art everywhere, therefore eternal life is everywhere ; for they, by Thy word, do know that, inasmuch as ' no man can see Thee and live,' this eternal life and Thy blessed presence is most pleasant, and had in fruition after in

another world, whereunto, by corporeal death, they do depart, and are translated to a place above them, where Thou dwellest in a light whereunto no man can approach. 'Abraham's bosom,' they read, was above, as the place for the wicked was alone and beneath. Elias was caught up 'into heaven;' and Thy Son, our dear Saviour, prayed, 'that where He is, those also might be which Thou hast given Him, and might see His glory.' Now He, dear Father, we learn by Thy Spirit, was ascended and taken up in His body 'into heaven,' whither Stephen looked up, and saw Thy Christ 'standing on Thy right hand,' to whom he prayed—'O, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Grant, I beseech Thee, gracious God and Father, that I may have 'a clean heart' more and more to see Thee, and so in spirit to see and look often upon this place, whither bring me at length in body also, I humbly pray Thee. Now what a thing this everlasting life is, no man is able to conceive, much less able to utter: for 'the peace of God,' which is eternal life, 'passeth all understanding.' The eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, neither can man's heart conceive those things which Thou, dear God, hast prepared for them that love Thee. Whatsoever, therefore, can be spoken or imagined of Thy kingdom, of the clearness, joy, and felicity of the same, is nothing in comparison, as we may see by Thy prophets, which (because they could not otherwise) under corporeal things have shadowed the same, so that the confidence of eternal life, what a thing it is, can in no wise be told, howbeit somewhat we may be brought into some sight of it by earthly things to think on this sort. If God hath given here so many things in a strange place, how many are the great good things that be at home; if in a prison are so many mercies, how many are they in the palace! If the wicked have so many benefits, what is the store prepared for Thy servants, O Lord! If Thy children find such comforts in the day of tears and mourning, what shall they find in 'the day of marriage!' If, with beasts, *men* have the use of so innumerable blessings, O how many

are the blessings which they shall enjoy with Thy angels and with Thyself, O dear God, 'when they shall see Thee,' and have the fruition of Thee, in whom is fulness without loathing of all good and fair things, so that nothing can be more desired, and that for evermore! This, Thy children, do not sow seed as they now believe it. I say that even in their bodies they shall see it for ever, as Job said. They believe that they shall see Thee, and their own eyes behold Thee, when these, our corporeal eyes, our bodies being raised, shall do their duties. Such a knowledge of Thee they believe to have, as shall not be only intellectual, and by faith as now it is, but even a full sight and fruition, yea, a conjunction and fellowship with Thee. Now they see but as in a glass, even in a dark speaking, but then they shall see Thee face to face; for faith, though it be the substance of things hoped for, and a certain dark sight of Thee, yet it may not be compared to the reward of faith and glorious sight, which we shall see in the light to come, when faith and hope shall cease. Now, Thy children know that we be Thy sons, 'though it yet appear not what they shall be.' 'We know,' say they, 'that when our Christ'—God and man—'shall appear, then shall we be like unto Him, for we see Him even as He is.' O, great prerogative, to see Christ as He is! which is not to be considered so much for the manhood as for the godhead itself, as Paul doth also write, that when all things are subject unto the Son, then shall He be subject unto the dear Father also, that God may be 'All in All.' And therefore Christ our Saviour prays for us, that we might 'know Thee, the only true God,' not that our Christ Thy Son is not with Thee, the true coequal and substantial God, but that we might know now, that after the judgment, such a mystery of His Mediatorship shall not be in heaven as is now on earth. Then, Thou blessed Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, shalt be all in all. Thou shalt be the end of our desires; Thou shalt be looked upon without end; Thou shalt be loved without loath-

ing; Thou shalt be praised without weariness. Although loathsomeness be wont to follow fulness, the contemplation of Thy pleasures shall bring with it no kind at all of loathsomeness. Society of joys shall be in the beholding of Thee. 'Pleasures are on Thy right hand for ever.' 'We shall be satisfied when we arise after Thine image'—I mean, in the resurrection. O, dear Father! show Thyself unto us, and we ask no more. O grant us with Thy saints in everlasting life to praise with perpetual praises Thy holy name. Happy then, and happy again are we, if that day were come, that we might sing with Thine angels, elders, and innumerable thousands, a new song, and say, 'Thou, Christ Jesu, which wast slain, art worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' In this blessed life all kind of maladies, griefs, sorrows, and evils be far away, and all full of all kind of mirth, joy, and pleasure. O! that we might see now a little with St. John, that 'holy city, New Jerusalem, descending from heaven prepared of God, as a bride trimmed for her husband.' O! that we might now something hear of the great Voice speaking out of the throne, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and He shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and death shall be no more, nor weeping, nor crying, nor sorrow; for the former things are gone.' This body is but a prison, wherein the soul is kept, and that, verily, not beautiful nor bright, but most foul and dark, disquiet, frail, and filled up with much vermin and venomous vipers (I mean it concerning our affections), standing in an air most unwholesome, and prospect most loathsome, if a man consider the excrements of it by the eyes, nose, mouth, ears, hands, feet, and all the other parts; so that no Bocardo, no little-ease, no dungeon, no bishop's prison, no gatehouse, no sink, no pit, may be compared in any point to be so evil a prison for the body, as the body is for and of the soul; wherefore, the children of God have been occasioned to cry and lament

their long being in it. 'O!' saith David, 'how long shall I lie in this prison?' 'O wretch that I am!' saith Paul, 'who shall deliver me out of this body of sin,' which is 'a heavy burden to the soul,' as the wise man saith. And therefore the godly cry, 'Now let Thy servant depart in peace.' O that I were dissolved, and had put off this carthly and frail tabernacle! Take me unto Thee! and bring my soul out of this prison, that it may give thanks unto Thee, O Lord! For so long as we be in this body, we cannot see the Lord; yea, it is a heavy habitation, and depresses down sore the spirit from the familiarity which it else should have with God. This world and life is an exile, a vale of misery, a wilderness of itself, being void of all virtues, and necessities, for eternal life; full of enemies, sorrows, sighings, sobbings, groanings, miseries, and in danger to hunger, cold, heat, thirst, sores, sickness, temptations, trouble, death, and innumerable calamities, being momentary, short, unstable, and nothing but vain; and therefore is compared to a warfare, a woman's travail, a shadow, a smoke, a vapour, a word, a storm, a tempest; in the which God's people feel great molestation, griefs, and troubles; now of Satan himself, now of the world, now of their own flesh, and that so wonderfully, diversely, dangerously, and contrarily, that they are enforced to cry, 'O Lord, when shall we come and appear before Thee?' when shall this misery end? when shall we be delivered out of this vale of misery—out of this wilderness, out of these continual afflictions and most perilous seas? But where art Thou, my Lord and dear 'Father of mercy,' there is not only no prison, no dolours, no sorrow, no sighings, no tears, no sickness, no hunger, no heat, no cold, no pain, no temptations, no displeasure, no torments, no horror, no dearth, no death, no weeping, no tears; there is, I say, not only no such thing, or any evil noisome or displeasing thing, but all liberty, all light, all joy, rejoicing, mirth, pleasure, health, wealth, riches, glory, power, treasure, honour, comfort, solace, love, unity, peace,

concord, wisdom, virtue, melody, meekness, felicity, and all that ever can be wished or desired in most security, eternity, and perpetuity that may be thought not only of man, but of angels and archangels; yea, above all thoughts. The eye hath not seen the like, the ear hath not heard, nor no heart is able to conceive in any point, any part of the blissful beatitude which is with Thee, dear Lord and Saviour, most gracious God and comforter. In recordation, O how Thy children rejoice! how condemn they the pleasures of this world: how little esteem they any corporeal grief or shame: how desire they to be with Thee! 'How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord God of hosts!' say they, that my soul hath a desire to enter the courts of the Lord: my heart and 'my soul rejoiceth in the living God.' Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they will be always praising Thee: 'for one day in Thy house is better than a thousand elsewhere.' And again, 'like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God.' My soul thirsteth for Thee; my flesh also 'longeth after Thee in a barren and dry land, where no water is.' They (Thy children, I mean) desire the day of that Thy redemption. Still they cry, 'Thy kingdom come!' They lift up their heads, 'looking for Thy appearing, O Lord,' which will 'make their vile body like to Thine own glorious body,' for when Thou shalt appear, they shall be like unto Thee. Thy angels will gather them together, and they shall meet Thee in the clouds and be always with Thee. They shall hear this joyful voice, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning.' Then shall they be 'like unto Thy angels.' Then shall they be 'like unto the sun in Thy kingdom.' Then shall they have crowns of glory, and be 'endued with white garments' of innocency and righteousness, having palms of victory in their hands. Oh, happy is he that may but see that immortal and incorruptible inheritance which they shall enjoy for evermore. Amen."

Such were the prison thoughts of John Bradford, the martyr. Let us just attend for a moment to the study-thoughts of the great John Foster. "I have been reading some of Milton's amazing descriptions of spirits, of their manner of life, their powers, their boundless liberty, and the scenes which they inhabit or traverse, and my wonted enthusiasm kindled high. I almost wished for death, and wondered with great admiration what that life and what those strange regions really are into which death will turn the spirit free! I cannot wonder, and I can easily pardon, that this intense and sublime curiosity has sometimes demolished the corporeal prison, by flinging it from a precipice or into the sea. Milton's description of Uriel and of the Sun revived the idea which I have before indulged as an imagination of sublime luxury, of committing myself to the liquid element (supposing some part of the sun a liquid fire), of rising on its swells, flashing amidst its surges, darting upwards a thousand leagues on the spiry point of a flame, and then falling again fearless into the fervent ocean. O! what is it to be dead? what is it to shoot into the expansion, and kindle into the ardours of eternity? what is it to associate with resplendent angels? I thank Heaven for the promise and prospect of an endless life. I hope to enjoy it amid the eternal splendours of Thy presence, O Jehovah! I thank Thee for this introductory stage, so remarkably separated by that thick-shaded frontier of death, which I see yonder, from the amplitude of existence. But oh! how shall I occupy the space of this stage, so as most absolutely to achieve its capital purpose—as to take possession of what, in Heaven's judgment, is its *utmost value*? Oh! do Thou seize my existence at its present point, and henceforward guide and model it Thyself! Images of excellence, of happiness, of real greatness, often appear to me, and look at me with an aspect inexpressibly ardent and emphatic. Monitors! why do you accuse me?—whither would you lead me? Yes, I will follow them, and try what is that scene to which they invite me. Oh, my Father! give



me Thy strength; inspire conduct, and crown one of the unworthiest of all Thy sons!" (Life, vol. i. pp. 166, 167.)

Once more let us enter the chamber of death, and listen to the utterances of the DYING with respect to the *Land of the Blessed*. "I," says the holy Halliburton, "shall shortly get a very different sight of God from what I have ever had, and shall be made meet to praise Him for ever and ever. O, the thoughts of an Incarnate Deity are sweet and ravishing! O, how I wonder at myself that I do not love Him more, and that I do not admire Him more! What a wonder that I enjoy such composure under all my bodily pains, and in the view of death itself! What a mercy that, having the use of my reason, I can declare His goodness to my soul! I long for His salvation! I bless His name, and die rejoicing in Him. O, blessed be God that I was born! O, that I was where He is! I have a father and mother and ten brothers and sisters in Heaven, and I shall be the eleventh. O, there is a telling in this Providence, and I shall tell it for ever! If there be such a glory in His conduct towards me now, what will it be to see the Lamb in the midst of the THRONE! Blessed be God that ever I was born!"

Finally, take an illustration from the close of the mortal history of the illustrious author of the "Blessedness of the Righteous." His descent towards the tomb was so gradual, that he continued the exercise of the functions of the ministry till within a very brief period of his death. His last services were, under such circumstances, peculiarly affecting. His perceptions of Divine truth were increasingly vivid, and his hope of immortality singularly vigorous. "Once in particular, at the Communion, he was rapt into such an ecstasy of joy and peace, that both himself and his audience thought he would have died under the strength of his emotions. It seemed as though, in that entranced and longing gaze on the already opening glories of the Heavenly world, the eager, fluttering spirit would have broken the slight and feeble tie which was all that bound it to earth and time. . . .

Howe continued to receive the visits of his friends after he was confined to his chamber; and, as they frequently declared, he addressed them more like one who was already an inhabitant of the Heavenly world, than 'as a man of like passions with themselves;' rather as a messenger from the skies than as one who was just departing on his journey thither: so steadfast, so assured was his hope, so full of tranquil certainty, so firm, indeed, the scenes he was about to visit could hardly be said to be in a strange land! They had already become familiarized by the vivid exercise of that faith which penetrates the invisible and eternal world. Those visions of faith seemed now brighter than ever. Like the Jewish legislator, he died on Mount Nebo, with the glittering scenes of the better country spread out beneath his feet."

He had lived on the tiptoe of hope with respect to his immortal destiny, and was among the few who have needed patience to assist their waiting for the final summons. He once told his wife, that "though he thought he loved her as well as it was fit for one creature to love another, yet, if it were put to his choice, whether to *die that moment* or to *live that night*, and the living that night would secure the continuance of his life for seven years to come, he would choose to die that moment!"

The gigantic mind of this devout man seems for many years to have breathed out aspirations which have since found such beautiful expression in the words of a poet of another generation. We commend the sentiments alluded to, to the calm and prayerful consideration of those bereaved ones who lament the loss of kindred who have been summoned far away from this mortal scene, and to those dear friends from whom the writer is about to be separated by half the circumference of the globe. Those sentiments have cheered him in the midst of his brethren, in many a dark and cloudy day, and now that he is about to be separated from his brethren, and from some others who are dearer to him than life itself, he would remind them that here below we are pilgrims, and our HOME is in HEAVEN. We must keep the final home constantly in view.

We must strive to meet in Heaven, and, amid all the toils and sorrows of the way, lean on our pilgrim staff, and sing :—

“ There is an hour of peaceful rest,  
To mourning wanderers given;  
There is a joy for souls distressed,  
A balm for every wounded breast,  
'Tis found above in heaven.

There is a soft, a downy bed,  
'Tis fair as breath of even ;  
A couch for weary mortals spread,  
Where they may rest the aching head,  
And find repose in heaven !

There is a *home* for weary souls,  
By sin and sorrow driven,  
When tossed on Life's tempestuous shoals,  
Where storms arise and ocean rolls,  
And all is drear but heaven !

*There* fragrant flowers immortal bloom,  
And joys supreme are given,  
*There* rays divine disperse the gloom ;  
Beyond the confines of the tomb,  
Appears the dawn of heaven.”

Ere long, dear reader, we shall receive the final summons, and enter into Rest. O, blessed, blessed freedom from all the turmoil of life ! There is “ Rest for the Weary,”—

“ Where everlasting suns  
Shed everlasting brightness—where the soul  
Drinks from the living streams of love, that roll  
By God's high throne !—myriads of glorious ones  
Bring their accepted offering. Oh ! how blest,  
To look from this dark prison to that shrine,  
To inhale one breath of Paradise divine,  
And enter into that eternal rest  
Which waits the sons of God !”

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## XVII.

### THE ENJOYMENTS IN THE LAND OF THE BLESSED.

DEATH AND THE INVISIBLE WORLD VIEWED IN RELATION TO THE  
WORK OF CHRIST.

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THE patriarch of Idumea cried out, "Is there not an appointed time for man upon the earth?" and the Apostle Paul rejoined, at the close of nearly twenty centuries, "It is appointed unto man once to die;" while the wise man in the interval was heard uttering the language of universal experience, "The living know that they shall die." Human life, indeed, through all its varied phases, is but a progression destined to end in the tomb. But death, though it be the end of life, is not the end of existence. They are tremendous issues to which death conducts that make it a subject of absorbing interest: it makes an end of probation, but it is, properly speaking, the gate through which man passes to his immortal destiny. The course of true wisdom is for a man so to live as constantly to be prepared for death: to keep his eye, in all his movements, fixed upon his "latter end." We do not mean that he should have a deep sense of its *inevitableness merely*, but that he should devoutly prepare for the final Audit. Our great naval hero, Nelson, carried his coffin with him in all his voyages and battles, while religious sentiments, we are sorry to think, had the least possible practical influence on his heart and life. It is well when, amid the scenes of beauty and enchantment which now and then enliven our mortal pilgrimage, we can bear in mind that before us there lies the dark "valley of the shadow of death," and that, in fact,

there is no outlet from this life to the regions of immortality but through this "dark valley." It is well that, while we taste the pleasures with which a merciful God flavours the bitter cup of mortal existence, we should, each of us, in his own proper individuality, habitually realize that a common destiny awaits whatever of each of us bears not the stamp of immortality, in "the house appointed for all living." "*The voice said Cry. And I said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Surely, the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth.*" (Isa. xl. 6—8.) In strict harmony with the solemn proclamation of the prophet, our great dramatist says:—

"By medicine life may be prolonged,  
But death will seize the doctor too."

It will strike the reader as a singular fact, that while all men admit the certainty of death, the mortal event takes most persons by surprise. This is the case, not only with persons in apparent health, who are summoned away unexpectedly, but also with persons suffering from some lingering, fatal sickness. Frequent are the surprises of the former class, and individuals are seized with death in the street, in the workshop and in the pulpit, and dragged away with the half-finished sentence on the lip; but the most surprising thing is that persons plainly suffering from some mortal malady are taken by surprise at last. The affecting circumstances connected with the death of the son of the immortal Burke strikingly illustrate this. That brilliant young man on his death-bed heard his parents, inconsolable at the prospect of their approaching bereavement, sobbing in an adjoining room. He rose from his bed, joined them, and endeavoured to engage his illustrious father in a cheerful conversation. "The father himself was silent, choked with grief. He again made an effort to console him: 'I am under no terror,' he said. 'I feel myself better, and in spirits, and yet my heart flutters, I know not why.

Pray talk to me, sir! Talk of religion, talk of morality, talk of indifferent subjects.' Here a noise attracted his notice and he inquired, 'Does it rain?' 'No. It is the rustling of the wind through the trees!' The whistling of the wind and the waving of the trees brought Milton's majestic lines to his mind, and he repeated them with uncommon grace and effect—

" 'His presence, ye winds! that from four quarters blow,  
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines;  
With every plant in sign of worship, wave!' "

A second time he took up the sublime and melodious strain, and, suiting the action to the word, waved his own hand in token of worship, and sunk into the arms of his father—a *corpsé*! Hardly a sensation told him that in an instant he would stand in the presence of his Creator, to whom his body was bent in homage, and whose praise still resounded from his lips." Such solemn events, dear reader, will fail of their proper influence on our hearts, unless they move us to reflect on the uncertainty of life, and the insidious approaches which are being opened on our vital powers by the last enemy. To the good man, this is a familiar subject. He often prays with the Psalmist—"Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days; what it is; that I may know how frail I am." Alas! we are frail; but if we were less frail than we are, the agents subsidized by Death would overpower us at last. He carries off one by water, another by fire; one by sword, another by pestilence; one by famine, another by surfeit; one is burnt alive, another is buried alive.

Amid these affecting scenes of mortality, how cheering are the declarations of Holy Writ in relation to the Mediatorial work of our great Redeemer,—"*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of DEATH, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to*

*bondage.*" (Heb. ii. 14, 15.) The glorious Personage here spoken of, as effecting our deliverance from the fear of death, is elsewhere declared as "JESUS CHRIST, *who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.*" (2 Tim. i. 10.) Dr. Bloomfield renders the original of this remarkable passage thus:—"JESUS CHRIST, who hath deprived death of its final power by procuring for us the resurrection of the dead." Dr. Wells, in his "Paraphrase of the Epistles," gives substantially the same view. Other critics have translated the original for the word "abolished" in the Authorized Version by the word "counterworked." And verily some of the miracles of our Lord seem to supply a *literal* illustration of this rendering. We select one of these illustrative examples, and while we ponder on it, let the reader try to realize every circumstance in the mysterious transaction. It is the raising of the Widow's Son: a case equally touching, whether viewed in relation to the deceased, or to his surviving relative. He was a "Son" in the flower of his life and hopes—an object of *general* interest to his neighbours, and of most *special* interest to his aged mother. He was an "*only Son,*" a fact that adds materially to the interest of the scene. But the climax is crowned by the desolate situation of his surviving mother; for she was "a Widow!" The city was moved to mingle its sympathies with the sorrow of the forlorn and aged woman; the thrill of sympathy ran through the whole community of Nain, and moved "much people" to accompany the widowed Mother to the grave of her "only son!" Behold the melancholy sight! The procession, at length, moves off. While others are resolving in their minds the strange Providence by which the fresh sapling is cut down, and the decayed old stump left standing without shelter or support, the poor, desolate creature! entertains but one feeling, and finds expression only for one sentiment,—“I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me!”

But these reflections, however natural, are destined soon to flow in another channel. He who hath the power to

"*counterwork*" death joins the procession. Behold how tenderly He comforts the aged mourner! She indeed is utterly incredulous to each word of comfort, but grief deprives her of the power of utterance. In the meantime, the mysterious stranger advances towards the bier on which the young man is being carried to "the house appointed for all living." And what is the wonder of every one, especially the sceptical Sadducee, when He addresses Himself authoritatively to the dead,—“Young man, I say unto thee, *ARISE!*” (Luke vii. 14.) The mourning group are almost petrified with astonishment; they “stand still” as once did Israel, when the prophet of the Lord was about to stretch forth his rod. It is a memorable scene! What power there is in these words! It was, they thought, the voice of a *man* that spoke, but its utterances were given forth in obedience to the volitions of a God, and though the sound might be unheard by the busy crowds in the City, yet, accompanied by influences more potent than those which inspire earthquake, storm or tempest, it at once reverses the action of the mysterious wheel of Destiny. The strange summons penetrated the invisible world, and, behold! the selected spirit, obedient to the mandate, comes back again and animates the mortal clay. He that was dead sits up and begins to speak, and *JESUS*, with a tenderness all His own, delivers “him to his *Mother!*” Well may the astonished mourners be filled with solemn awe and cry out, saying, “*A great prophet hath risen up among us, and God hath visited His people!*” (Ver. 16.)

Thus are supported, by the evangelical record, the critical authorities who regard the true import of the original to be that our Lord has thwarted the purposes of Death!—hath frustrated his designs!—hath upset his machinery! The truth is, that death, though not formally, is *virtually* abolished. It happens not that by virtue of the work of Christ men have ceased to go down to the grave, but that Death has lost his sting! O, how effectually our glorious Redeemer maintained the struggle against the



mortal foe of our race! His fall on Mount Calvary was indeed an occasion of gloom and dismay to His disciples; but He came forth again on the third day as the Sovereign of Hades and the conqueror of Death. He sunk there after the manner of the sun behind a thunder-cloud in the western sky; but on the morning of the third day He rose as a brighter orb in a cloudless canopy, where, among objects of surpassing splendour, His is "the glory that excelleth!" In reference to the believer, Death tries hard to keep up his apparatus of terror; he still wears the aspect of a monster, but that is all; he has lost his sting, and Christ holds the keys of Death and of Hades. Listen to the declaration of His power by His own lips to the exile of Patmos:—"Fear not: I am the First and the Last; I am He that liveth and was dead, and I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. i. 18, 19.)

These words contain a declaration as to the Redeemer's possessing the power of the Keys, which, though figurative, may well reassure the hearts of believers as long as the world shall last; the words are an assertion of the Redeemer's dominion over the invisible world. Now this dominion has a triple foundation.

*It is founded in covenant right.* By a Divine compact between the Father and the Son, the latter was to assume human nature and endure unprecedented sufferings, and perform unprecedented deeds in that nature, as the means of putting down the rebellion which had broken out on earth against the authority of the Sovereign Ruler. Now Christ was moved to this great undertaking by His love towards man on the one hand, and His jealousy for the honour of the Divine government on the other. But the Father engaged to reward Him in His complex nature for His devotion to both by conferring on Him the administration of the Universe. "All power," says He, "is given to me in Heaven and in Earth."

*It is also founded in merit.* The cause of death among man-

kind, according to the Divine Record, was the transgression of the Divine Law by our Great Progenitor. "*As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*" (Rom. v. 12.) The reign of death has been universal over all the natural descendants of Adam, because sin has been universal. The cases of Enoch and that of Elijah are no exception to the rule. They must be regarded as having undergone in their ascent to Heaven a change equivalent to death, for we read—"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." All men have suffered death as the hereditary physical evil that accompanies this hereditary moral evil, which has diffused its contagion among all the natural descendants of Adam. But JESUS was miraculously conceived in the womb of the Virgin. As the result of the miraculous conception, He was wholly free from taint of that hereditary corruption which affects every other member of the common family. But being free from *that*, he was free judicially from the law of death. If He died then, it was solely in a *representative* capacity. He died not for Himself but for others. But He was God as well as man, and His merits must be judged of, not by the contemplation of His spotless humanity merely, but by reference to the matchless value of His person in the great system of Being as the God-man. If He the man—if He the God-man—died not for Himself, but as the representative of the race, the merits of His sacrifice were applied to the account of the race in the first instance, and in the next to His own exaltation to the Throne of Universal Sovereignty. Hence the words of the Apostle—"We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." (Heb. ii. 9.) In the parallel passage in the Philipians we read—"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Chap. ii. 9—11.)

*Finally, it is founded in power.* You read that He was declared to be "the Son of God with power" by the resurrection from the dead, and you read of "the power of His resurrection." As you have seen, our Lord had no sooner entered the territory of death, than earth and hell combined their powers to keep Him there as a hopeless captive. The image of death was impressed on the crucified person of the Galilean. A guard of soldiers watched the garden; a huge stone with its Roman seal closed the sepulchre. What precautions to preserve a dead captive! But they were wholly unavailing! As soon as ever the instant ticked on the great clock of the Universe, which had been fixed in the pre-determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God for the resurrection of the third day, the *Divine* Son put forth His omnipotence, and broke the barriers of the tomb! Impotent were all the precautions of His foes to confine Him. Impotent, indeed, must have been all conceivable precautions. Had a pile of worlds been heaped up on that tomb—had the seal of the Roman Emperor been countersigned by SATAN himself, in the name of all the fiends whom the Muse of Milton beheld at the great council in Pandemonium—and had all the military resources, we will not say of the empire of the world merely, but of the whole empire of Evil, been laid under tribute to preserve in the power of death the Divine Son of the Father—He would have risen at the predestined instant, in defiance of the universe in arms, the embodiment of that resurrection power which shall, on the last great day, open every receptacle of death, and summon forth all the captives which the sin of the first man has put in His power!

It is thus that Christ is possessed of the keys of DEATH and HADES; a fact well adapted to reassure His people in the prospect of death. For if Christ have dominion over the invisible world, the gate of death, which leads thither, can never be opened, but by His direction or permission.

"FEAR NOT," ye saints! for since Christ carries the keys, *your death will be sure to occur at the most proper time.* Faith

in the Redeemer's dominion is indispensable to a devout acquiescence in the wisdom and goodness of the arrangement as to the time of our death. It was because Job knew that his Redeemer lived, that he could devoutly exclaim, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change cometh!" It was because David felt assured that his "times" were in the Divine hand, that he could say with calm assurance, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me!"

"FEAR NOT," ye saints! for He that wisely fixes the day of your death will take care that it shall occur under *the proper circumstances*. Men's feelings on this point have been very diverse. Some persons have desired to meet death after some premonitory sickness shall have afforded time for reflection; others again have wished to meet it in the most sudden and unexpected manner possible. Men in general desire to meet the Foe in the former way; Julius Cæsar, and after him Gustavus Adolphus, desired to meet it in the latter. Some have desired to die amid the booming of cannon. Nelson said to Captain Hardy at Trafalgar, "You know that I always wished to die in this way." Mirabeau desired to die to the sounds of martial music, and with the bed strewn with flowers, while others, and the greater number, have wished simply to meet the mortal foe calmly, in the bosom of their own families. Some have desired that on the arrival of the inevitable hour they might be despatched by *this* instrument, and others by *that*. But old Fuller, like the saint that he was, having considered the various avenues that lead to the grave, said—"None of them please me. But away with these thoughts! The mark must not choose what arrow shall be shot against it." The mode is not left to our own selection. It is our duty to remember that it is the Lord only who holds the keys, and acquiescing in His pleasure to say, when He opens the gate for our departure, in the words of old Eli—"It is the Lord, let Him do as seemeth to Him good!" (1 Sam. iii. 18.)

"FEAR NOT," ye saints! for your departure will be signalled by all *needful comfort and support*. David, who had said of the Redeemer, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption," could say of himself, "My heart and my flesh fail; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." "This God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death." Only take heed that you have the lintels and the door-posts of your soul-house sprinkled with the blood of CHRIST, your "passover, who was sacrificed" for you, when the general destroyer comes, and he shall have no power over *you*. Death and hell will continue their league against you, but it will be in vain; dangers will beset you to the close of your course, as they did Israel of old, "through all the waste, from Egypt quite to Canaan's shore," but the Lord your Captain will lead you in triumph through them all. Your mortal sickness may have its Red Sea of tribulations, but, like Israel, you shall behold the briny waters standing up on either hand as walls of brass, while the Lord's anointed pass through with "songs of rejoicing."

What, then, remains to alarm your fears? Are you appalled at the sight of the Philistines, by whom you are hemmed in on every side? Be comforted, for "greater is He that is for you, than all they that be against you!" Is it the prospect of death that alarms you? and do you ejaculate with palpitating heart,—“Ah! what shall I do in the swellings of Jordan?” Be you comforted with the assurance that your Divine Captain has already forded the stream, sounding all its depths, exploring all its intricacies, and He hath abolished death for all them that believe in Him! To mere "flesh and blood," the last we know will be the most awful of all earthly scenes. But be ye comforted with the assurance that death is destined to be to you the avenue to a higher type of life. It is Sin *alone* that can make death truly appalling, and we can well understand how it may appal *those* who are its captives, and groan under its bonds; we

can well understand especially how Sin, as "the sting of Death," may inspire mortal horrors into the hearts of the sons and daughters of concupiscence. But your sins are pardoned; your spiritual corruptions have been cleansed away by the blood of sprinkling! No longer subject, then, to its condemning and polluting power, you may well cast off your fears and meet the mortal event with strains of exultation! "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?" The "ransomed of the Lord," there remain to you no terrors of hell to alarm your fears. Hell is the prison-house only of the devil and his angels, and "whosoever worketh abomination, and loveth or maketh a lie!" But you are created anew in Christ Jesus. You have made "the First and the Last" your friend by faith in His name, and therefore "have everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation!" You have an abiding interest in Him who hath destroyed both death and "him that hath the power of death," and over you, therefore, "the second death shall have no dominion!"

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## CONCLUSION.

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O! **HAPPY** destiny of the followers of the Lamb. From henceforth the efforts of the race and the dangers of the combat are ended; the toils and sufferings of the Christian life are over for ever. A firm trust in the mercy of High Heaven had often moved them to exclaim, in the midst of the conflict—"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, *For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!*" (Rom. viii. 35—39.) The conflict is now over, and they repose in sweet fields of glory. We are more than conquerors! There is a peculiar force in this heroic phrase. It is as if he had said, "We bear all the sufferings of the present time with resigned patience, and, after all this manifestation of weakness, we shall conquer in the conflict." It conveys something more than conquest when literally construed. It is something to bear great trials without depression; it is something more to conquer these trials after a severe combat; but to affirm that the believer is more than conqueror, is not to say he shall conquer without combat and triumph without resistance, but make his trials matter of joy, and even of exultation, regarding them, not so much afflictions and sorrows, as divine honours and favours, to be succeeded by immeasurably greater honours in the day of final recompense. The saints are conquerors of the noblest order. They are the

true hero-race ! In comparison of these, the Cæsars were but bastard heroes. The Christian's conquests are at once noblest in their nature, achieved by the noblest means, and illustrative of the noblest spirit. He is the conqueror of the world, which neither Cæsar nor any other worldly hero ever was. He conquers himself also—a conquest from which Alexander himself shrunk. He successfully opposes moral to physical force—a kind of resistance of which the saints supply the only successful examples. We may here cite what we have somewhere read of a venerable saint in Scotland, who admirably illustrated on his dying bed the views we have just expressed. For many long years he had patiently borne suffering, and vigorously resisted all the powers of evil. He became blind towards the close of his pilgrimage, and so was unable to read the word of God as he had done in former years. He was at length about to die, and, no longer able to read himself, he desired some one to turn to the Epistle to the Romans—to the eighth chapter of the epistle, and to the thirty-eighth verse of that chapter. When the passage was found, he said, “Now put my finger on it.” They did so. He inquired, “Is my finger on the words ‘I am persuaded that neither DEATH, nor life,’ &c.?” The attendants answered, “Yes.” “Well, then,” said he, “God be with you, my children. I have breakfasted with you, and shall sup to-night with the Lord Jesus Christ,” and so departed from this vale of woe.

The way to Mount Sion had been to him like the fabled ascent to the summit where virtue is described in ancient story as dwelling in perfect security ; he had passed through thorns and briars, along shelving rocks, and by the side of falling precipices, but he was not dismayed. He felt assured that, under Heavenly guidance, he would reach the summit where eternal serenity should crown all the toils of the way, and he should be hailed by the great fellowship of Immortals who had reached the Mount before him. What a greeting for this aged saint ! and what a greeting for you, dear reader,



to anticipate! Milton, with his poetic sublimity; Baxter, with his seraphic ardour; Flavel, with his "burning charity divine;" Bates, with his sacred beauties; Wesley, with his apostolic fervour; and Howe, with his profundity, power, and pathos, all mingle in the sacred throng on that high eminence. *There* you shall see Paul, Peter, James, and John in the arms of Triumph! *There* you shall, if faithful unto death, behold the long line of the patriarchs and prophets!—the glorious army of apostles and martyrs—amid the splendours of the beatific vision! and, O delightful thought! the saints upon whom the ends of the world have come—gathered from every family under Heaven; they shall all welcome you, and you shall sit down with them at the right hand of the Father. *There* the Christian MARINER will take a long farewell of the tempest, and enjoy an eternal calm!—a long farewell of the storm-cloud and the troubled sky, and enjoy endless repose amid the eternal splendours of the Heavenly world! *There* shall the Christian WARRIOR—faint, weary, and worn—hang up his armour in a region of eternal security, where he shall never again be summoned to conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil. *There* he will go forth as a conqueror in victor's robes, waving the victor's palm, and wearing the victor's crown! With delight he will review every well-fought field, recount the toils of the march and the perils of the fight, and, overwhelmed with grateful emotions, renew on the plains of Heaven the last song that he raised on earth: "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Soldiers of the Cross! who have yet to encounter the last Enemy, this subject is full of comfort to you. Be of good cheer, for God will support you. He, in the final struggle, will teach your hands to war, and your fingers to fight. Yours at this moment is the position—yours the assurance—and yours, in due time, will be the triumph, on which we have before expiated, of the exultant apostle, whose words

you can even now utter—"I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And while you raise the strains of exultation on earth, the long line of prophets and apostles, and the glorious company of martyrs and confessors in Heaven, wait, with earnest expectation, to hear your welcome to the skies from the Judge of all—"Enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord."

"O, what a blessed hope is ours,  
While here on earth we stay!  
We more than taste the heavenly powers,  
And antedate that day."

Thus cheered by the hope which the religion of the Cross inspires; thus encouraged by the foremost of the conquering bands who have crossed the flood and entered the land flowing with milk and honey, you will go down to the stream of Death full of confidence, under the guidance of the great Captain of your Salvation. He will keep your head above the water-floods, and, before you emerge on Canaan's side to join the sacramental host of God's elect, while the death struggle is yet unfinished, He will enable you to lisp the first notes of the new song of Moses and the Lamb, and thus pass with joy and gladness to the land of immortality! *Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood. . . . To Him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. AMEN. (Rev. i. 5, 6.)*

Sinner, we have been sketching the destiny of the saint at the time of our Lord's appearing; but oh, do not lay down this book heedlessly, as if there were no future for you; for you must have your part in "that day" as well as he. Inconceivably awful will be the transactions of that dread day to all the slaves of sin. Let us endeavour, by the light of revelation, to unfold to such the last chapter of earthly history.

Hearken, then, to the voice of the angel as he plants one foot upon the sea, another upon the land, and swears by Him that liveth for ever and ever, that time shall be no longer! Hark, again, to the clarion-blast of the trump of God! Suddenly the earth is converted into one vast funeral pile, on which are consumed those palaces which the builders vainly thought would last for ever; where perish all the forms of earthly grandeur with those mausoleums, sarcophagi, and other monuments intended to be everlasting memorials of the dead. Hear the loud wail of agonizing terror from those conscience-smitten wretches who cry to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. vi. 16, 17.) See the dead start from their dusky sleeping-places in countless myriads; the planets, arrested midway in their courses, mingle in the universal chaos; while the stars fall from heaven, and the melting elements add fuel to the raging flames which envelope the globe at every point. But, lo! what is this? The great white throne appears. Behold there the Judge, at whose approach the heavens and the earth flee away! Behold the thousand thousands that minister unto Him! Behold the judgment set and the books opened! And O, remember that you will mingle in that awful scene; that you will have an important part to perform on that dreadful day of the Lord! See the angels separate the good from the bad throughout the whole field of vision,—the good are placed on the right hand of the Judge, and the bad on the left. Behold! the Judge forms his lips as if for speech. He turns in beckoning attitude towards those on the right! Hark! it is their final sentence He is uttering. The sounds rise above the crash of worlds, in accents that ravish the heart,—“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Matt. xxv. 34.) But see! He turns again; it is to those on the left. How altered His manner!—what

terror His frown inspires in the self-accused myriads who stand there! Hark, He speaks! it is their eternal doom he thunders forth,—“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” (Matt. xxv. 41.) It is done! The seal of everlasting destiny is affixed to each individual of all these countless myriads, and conscience endorses the sentence in tones of self-reproach, which rise above the crack of doom! Those on the right hand accompany the Judge to the mansions prepared for them in His Father’s house; those on the left are dragged by fiends into the regions of everlasting woe. Who does not feel an all-absorbing interest in those awful scenes, and involuntarily exclaim, How shall I appear? Where shall I stand? And O, what shall be my eternal destiny?

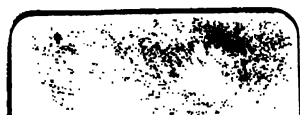
Well, dear reader, having directed your attention to the scenes which shall signalise the final hour of this world, it is our duty now to lead you from the judgment-seat to the mercy-seat; from the judgment-seat of the last great day to the mercy-seat of this—the day of your visitation. Thank God! there is a mercy-seat where we poor, wretched, undone sinners, may be prepared to stand before the judgment-seat. To this mercy-seat let us exhort you to flee. It is sprinkled with the blood of Jesus. The everlasting destiny of every man will turn simply upon how he has acted in reference to this mercy-seat; and it shall be administered with the utmost impartiality. “And it shall be as with the people, so with the priest; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.” (Isaiah xxiv. 2.)

FINIS.











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